Emancipation in East Poland *by Alter Brody*

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

September 26, 1939

Why the Red Army Marched

AN EDITORIAL ARTICLE

A Cable from London *by Richard Goodman*

Soviet-German Trade *by Paul G. McManus*

Writers and the War *by Samuel Sillen*

The Wrath of Dies *by Ernest Moorer*

Where You Pay to Vote *by William Pickens*

New Talent for Baseball *by Hugh Bradley*

A Short Story *by Millen Brand*

CARTOONS BY GROPPER, GARDNER REA, AND OTHERS

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Between Ourselves

GOSH, are our faces red! For a nice family magazine we have been getting a great deal of attention these days. Heywood Broun guesses that being an NM editor is the toughest job in the world. This is just Heywood's usual modesty, because *Broun's Nutmeg* is the most agitated weekly of all. Peter Neale gets into a fiery argument with Howard X. Brown over the Polish situation, while the publisher sits in the corner with Blake Hemphill, trying to make head or tail of the non-aggression pact. A war communique comes in from William Saroyan on the San Francisco salient, including such piercing analyses as "Hitler is nobody and nothing. It was idiocy that caused this war." This causes fresh consternation in the *Nutmeg* offices, because it shatters Harold Yudain's argument that the boll weevil is back of it all. George K. Arthur goes back to *Lysistrata* for the key, while Lobelia Sparks is forced to agree with Frank Ryan that "many ugly rumors have been circulated in Paris." When any of our editors want a really tough job they will be loaned out to the *Nutmeg*.

But the reason why we are blushing is contained in the mail we've been getting these days.

One of the letters to NM since the war is from a radio announcer who encloses a check for a subscription: "As you undoubtedly know, my station uses both AP and UP news services. And being in the thick of the European crisis I found that neither news agencies were accurate, several times contradicting each other in the short space of three minutes.

"And so I let go with a remark about searching beneath the rumors of press reports. A radical friend of mine heard me and brought me the September 12 issue of NEW MASSES. Now I've found that NEW MASSES and I find ourselves in agreement on a great many issues."

Another letter from Hollywood: "Congratulations on 'Sights and Sounds' for September 12. Dugan is informative and d'Usseau is refreshing. It's a pleasure to come across a journal that makes sense about Hollywood these days. Keep it up. We need such stuff in this neck of the woods and you boys seem the only ones willing and able to do it."

A doctor in the Bronx writes: "You fellows have done a swell job on the present situation. I was especially awed by the tremendous insight shown in your editorial written the day of the first announcement of the pact. The value of our Marxist theory has never been better illustrated."

With the tang of autumn leaves in our nostrils, NM's Lecture Bureau announces its revival for the fall and winter season. Such distinguished names as Mike Gold, Joseph North, A. B. Magil, Joseph Starobin, Robert Terrall, Samuel Sillen, James Dugan, and a score of others who are associated with NM either in editorial or contributing capacities can now be booked for autumn and winter lecture appearances. Subjects vary from Dugan on "Hot Jazz" to Sillen on "The Contemporary Novel" to North and Magil and Starobin on "Politics and Economics." Inquiry from clubs, colleges, student groups, trade unions, and other organizations is invited. For details, write NEW MASSES Lecture Bureau, 461 Fourth Ave., New York City.

As a special service to our readers, in response to a deluge of demand, our circulation department announces that bulk copies of NM are available to our readers for their friends at special discount. The discount of course applies only to orders for ten or more copies. The price in this respect is 10 cents per copy. Past, present, or future issues of NM may be ordered on this basis. If you prefer, send us in your list of names (ten or more) and we'll do the mailing for you. The price in this connection is also 10 cents a copy. Address your orders to our circulation department. All orders must be accompanied by cash, money order, or stamps.

"You can't do this to me"—that's what one irate subscriber said when we cut him off for failing to send in his renewal money for NM. Well, we can and we will; in fact, we've got to. Most of our readers will agree that NM is more necessary today than ever before. Please help us spread by fishing that unpaid NM bill out of your desk drawer and sending it to us with the dough right off.

Alter Brody

Mr. Brody describes himself as a very old fellow traveler. In 1918, when the USSR was not a fashionable traveling companion, he dedicated his first book, "A Family Album," to the Soviet Union. He is also the author of "Lamentations: Four Folk Plays of the American Jew." He has contributed poems, criticism, articles, and plays to the "Atlantic Monthly," the "American Caravan," "Theater Arts," the old "American Mercury," the "Dial," the "Nation," "Poetry," the "New Republic," and, of course, to NM.

Who's Who

WILLIAM PICKENS, director of branches for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, is the author of an autobiography, *The Heir of Slaves*, a collection of essays on *The New Negro*, and two volumes of short stories. Mr. Pickens is a contributing editor of the Associated Negro Press. . . . Richard Goodman is NM's European correspondent. . . . Major Allen Johnson, an authority on military matters, fought with the International Brigade in Spain. . . . Ernest Moorer is a Washington correspondent of the *Daily Worker*. . . . Moissaye J. Olgin is the editor of the *Jewish Daily Morning Freiheit*. . . . Millen Brand, well known novelist and short story writer, is the author of *The Heroes* and *The Outward Room*. . . . Hugh Bradley is a well known sportswriter, formerly of the New York *Post*.

Flashbacks

"HAVING obtained a majority in the Soviets of Workers and Soldiers Deputies of both capitals (Moscow and Petrograd), the Bolsheviks can and must take power into their own hands," began Lenin, writing to the Central Committee of his party on September 25, 1917. "History will not forgive us if we do not assume power now. No apparatus? There is an apparatus: the Soviets and democratic organizations."

In Italy, when the world expected a social revolution, vacillations in the ranks of working class leaders became all too apparent. On Sept. 24, 1920, right-wing Socialist leaders prevailed on metal workers who were in control of the factories to accept a compromise agreement. Writing of this a few days later the executive committee of the Communist International noted: "In Italy there exist all the necessary conditions for a victorious revolution except one—a good working class organization." . . . The great steel strike which brought out 365,000 men began Sept. 22, 1919, with William Z. Foster at its head.

This Week

NEW MASSES, VOL. XXXIII, No. 1

September 26, 1939

Why the Red Army Marched *An Editorial Article* . . 3
A Cable from London *by Richard Goodman* 5
Dead Before the Final Ultimatum *A Poem by Alexander F. Bergman* 6
The Polish Campaign Ends *by Major Allen Johnson* . . 7
Gropper's Cartoon 8
Seawards *A Poem by James Neugass* 10
Emancipation in East Poland *by Alter Brody* 11
The Wrath of Dies *by Ernest Moorer* 15
Poll Tax: Denial of Democracy *by William Pickens* . . 16
Portrait of a Tenement 18
Duranty's "Kapital" *by Moissaye J. Olgin* 20
Editorial Comment 22
Readers' Forum 24

REVIEW AND COMMENT

Writers and the War *by Samuel Sillen* 25
Elliot Paul's Mystery *by James Dugan* 26
Brief Reviews 26

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Baseball: The Nearly National Game *by Hugh Bradley* 29
The Boy Grew Older *by James Dugan* 30

Art work by Gardner Rea, McGill, Darryl Frederick, the Photo League, John Heliker, Herb Kruckman, Aaron Elkind.

Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

Published weekly by WEEKLY MASSES CO., INC., at 461 Fourth Ave., New York City. (West Coast Bureau, 6715 Hollywood Boulevard, Room 287, Hollywood, Calif.)
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Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies, 15 cents. Subscription $4.50 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico. Six months $2.50; three months $1.25; Foreign $5.50 a year; six months $3; three months $1.50. In Canada, $5 a year, $2.75 for six months. Subscribers are notified that no change in address can be effected in less than two weeks. NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers and artists. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompanied by stamped and self-addressed envelope. NEW MASSES does not pay for contributions.

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXIII SEPTEMBER 26, 1939 NUMBER 1

Why the Red Army Marched

A masterpiece of open diplomacy. Smashing the heritage of czardom. The sun also rises for the Ukraine. An editorial article.

NICHOLAS ROMANOV, imperial czar of all the Russias, has been gone these twenty-two years. The rotting ruins of the system that bore his name were swept off the face of the earth last Sunday morning as the Soviet Red Army in the great good strokes of a Gropper cartoon advanced across its six-hundred-mile frontier. The heritage of czarism toppled to the ground. But the rumble of its final fall was heard in all the embassies, the drawingrooms, the bomb-sheltered editorial offices of the whole imperialist world. Few men mourned for Nicholas. Who will mourn today for a handful of Polish landowners who abdicated every pretense to the leadership of their people? Who will mourn for a score of Ukrainian emigres, drugged with the opiate of a reactionary nationalism in a time when the empires are going forever?

The Soviet action, liberating eleven million Jews, Ukrainians, and Byelo Russians from Nazi rule, *is the greatest piece of open diplomacy since the October Revolution itself.* At one blow, the solvent of socialism washes away the bases for suicidal strife among minority peoples in one of Europe's most depressed areas where five hundred years of imperialist statesmanship merely added geographic insults to economic injuries. At one blow, the Soviet Union solves the accumulated frontier conflicts arising from a thousand years of feudal idiocy upon which were superimposed the most ruthless oppressions of the imperialist technique.

WHAT THE SOVIET ACTION PROVES

For us, the Soviet action proves precisely what the frightened headlines of the enraged capitalist press is straining to deny: *it proves 100 percent that there is no military alliance between socialist Russia and fascist Germany.* Partition of Poland? Decided upon in advance? Nothing of the sort! The Russian move forestalled the complete absorption of Poland, whose collapse was facilitated if not desired by Downing Street itself. The Russian move, for all the newspapers say, establishes a barrier between the Nazi army and the oil fields of Rumania which no pacts, no credits, no guarantees from Chamberlain could achieve. Writing from Moscow on Monday, September 18, G. E. R. Gedye says: "There is no tendency in authoritative British circles here to believe the version that Russia's latest move was planned at the time of the signature of the Russo-German (non-aggression) pact. On the contrary, emphasis is laid on the fundamental, mutual distrust of both parties to the pact." One glance at the map and you can see that the entrance of the Soviet soldiers into Galicia not only keeps the Polish oilfields from the Nazi maw, but establishes the greatest single obstacle to the Nazi threat upon another smaller European state. Today, there is no way for fascist aggression upon Rumania except through the high Tatra Mountains leading across the Carpatho-Ukraine, that is, aggression upon Hungary itself.

> "DON'T fire, we have come to help you. Let us march together on Lwow." That was the cry of Soviet Red Army men to the Polish soldiers according to last Tuesday's dispatch from Edgar Ansel Mowrer in the New York *World-Telegram* and the Chicago *Daily News.* "Polish circles," Mowrer continues, "report that the Russians are trying to avoid conflict with the Poles and the Russians 'shelled' one Polish village with blank ammunition."
>
> Next day, the New York *Times* reported that Major William H. Colbern, American military attache in Poland, saw a Soviet officer dismount from one of the eleven-ton Russian tanks. "Major Colbern said he was cordial and polite. The major later talked to the tank commander, and quoted the officers as saying, 'we are against the Germans.' Major Colbern said the Polish troops fraternized with the Russians and gave them cigarettes."

"Red imperialism"? Let's think more deeply into the valid meaning of language. The Soviet Union makes no significant economic gains from this move. No capitalist class derives advantage because no capitalist class exists within the Soviet Union. With the exception of the Galician oilfields, the Soviet Union takes on *economic liabilities,* rather than assets: a barren plain, forests and marshes in which primitive peasants must now be raised to the level of culture and civilization prevailing within the Soviet Union itself.

In the North, in Byelo Russia, the Soviets likewise wash away that historic antagonism of the Poles to the Lithuanian state which resulted in the seizure of Vilna in 1920, an enmity which the Polish reactionaries expressed last November in their march on Lithuania, prevented only by the firm Soviet stand.

And the Jews? Only a week ago, the Socialist *Daily Forward,* as well as the rest of the pharisaic press, wailed that the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact had betrayed the Jews! If, indeed, it were within the power of the Soviet Union to help save by its own action even part of the Polish Jewish population, is that not precisely what has happened now? The truth is that the Jews, as well as all other peoples for whom the Soviet Union has impartial concern, could have been saved in the first place by that collective pact among Britain, France, the USSR, and Poland—which the Soviet Union alone worked for, fought for, and hoped for until the very end. Today, in this historic Jewish homeland, where blood ran thick in the Lodz pogroms, where every town bears witness in the literature and culture of the Polish Jews to the ghetto life, the numerous clausus laws, the most barbaric persecution of any Jewish minority save in Germany itself, a new day will dawn. Socialism accomplishes what the prayer of the Chassidic rabbis, the bribery of the wealthy Ghetto spokesman, the nostalgic futility of the Zionist emigration could not achieve.

UKRAINIAN RIGHTS

And the Ukrainians themselves? How shamefully their legitimate national desires have been misused in the three centuries since the great Ukrainian empire crumbled against the Cossack, Polish, and Magyar hordes. For two brief years, 1917-19, the most reactionary, anti-Semitic, anti-Polish, anti-Russian nationalists, led by the sinister Petlura, dominated this region in alliance first with the German Army (which had seized the Russian Ukraine at the peace of Brest-Litovsk) and then with the anti-Soviet interventionists. No sooner did Poland wrest this land away but what the Ukrainians (and of course the Jews) were bitterly persecuted: their schools and language banned, their schismatic Catholic church undermined, their economy subjected to the reactionary semi-feudalism of Poland itself. Meanwhile, 83 percent of the Ukrainians, or over 35,000,000, having restored a portion of their land to Soviet rule, flourished and prospered under socialism. Against the conspiracies of the Trotskyites, against the agents of reactionary nationalism, the people of Ukraine improved their heritage. But in the outer world, the irredentist leaders with fantasies of a

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Greater Ukrainian empire plotted their return to power. In recent years, the Nazis exploited this dream of a Ukrainian empire, incorporating Soviet Ukraine of course, through which Nazi imperialism would find the broad highway to the Dardanelles, the Near East, the Urals. On the very day that this anachronism breathed its last, the New York *Times* carried an Associated Press dispatch from Pittsburgh in which a certain Dr. Alexander Granovsky, president of the American Ukrainian Liberation Committee, said that Europe's fifty million Ukrainians "welcome the German invasion of Poland in the hope that it will liberate the 8,000,000 Ukrainians in Poland."

But no more of that. No more bleeding frontiers here. That miserable dream in which peoples of these territories were but pawns is forever swept into the dustheap of history.

Power politics? *This is politics in the interest of Soviet power,* which represents not merely the national interests of the Soviet state but also the dreams and desires of millions of ordinary folk in five-sixths of the world. It is the type of politics which all the hard-faced men in Downing Street, the Wilhelmstrasse, Tokyo, and Washington will understand. Millions of ordinary folk feel thankful and not a trifle proud that those capable workingmen of Russia who came to the helm of the Soviet state have learned to excel in *diplomacy* as in all other phases of the arts, sciences, and industry.

At every hairpin turn of politics, some strap-hangers lose their balance and demeanor. The Miniver Cheevys, and the Caspar Milquetoasts, happy only in their unhappiness, whimper and fidget. The occasion is exploited by such figures as Ludwig Lore and Alexander Kerensky, who slipped on *their* banana peel of history twenty years ago, to call for a war of intervention against the Soviet Union. It would be foolish to ignore the fierce anti-Soviet winds which are blowing up around us as the difficulties and disappointments of the imperialist world accumulate. But for all the similarities between the second and the first imperialist war, one fundamental difference emerges, the existence of the USSR, exercising a magnetic influence on arms and men. Only the friends of Nicholas Romanov have cause for regrets.

An Imperialist War

War enlists loyalties as well as men, but that is no reason for letting fuzzy emotion gallop away with our wits. Judging from what one reads and hears these days, the brokers who sold Czechoslovakia to Hitler and abandoned Poland to her fate have suddenly become starry-eyed crusaders against fascism, architects not of Munich but of a just, democratic peace. This may be a convenient myth for those who seek escape from unpleasant realities. But the structure of peace and democracy is not built of gold-bricks. After three weeks of fighting, the facts must be faced. This is an imperialist war. This is the twin of the imperialist peace of Munich.

As in the last war, two groups of imperialist powers face each other. One must not confuse the role of Britain and France with the anti-fascist peace front which the Soviet Union sought and which could probably have prevented war. The participation of the USSR would have drastically changed the character of the war, should it have proved unavoidable. The influence of the greatest power in Europe would have been exerted toward an active defense of all nations menaced by Nazi aggression, toward a complete defeat of German fascism and the victory not only of the anti-aggression bloc, but of democratic Germany as well. And the democratization of the governments of Britain and France would have been an inevitable corollary to a genuine anti-fascist peace front.

That peace front was rejected by Chamberlain and Daladier. Of this rejection Lloyd George wrote in the Philadelphia *Record* of September 10 (his statement was not considered fit to print by any New York newspaper except the *Daily Worker*):

> One must not conceal from ourselves the enormous difference it would have made to our chances if at this hour the great air fleet of Germany, which is so appreciably facilitating the advance of her armies in Poland, were confronted by an equally powerful fleet of Russia—and if two powerful Russian armies were advancing, one upon East Prussia and the other toward Cracow.
>
> That was the plan placed before our military missions by Voroshilov. The tragic story of the rejection of this plan has yet to be told and the responsibility for the stupidities that lost us Russia's powerful support justly affixed and sternly dealt with.

By supporting the Polish government's refusal to permit the Red Army to defend Poland against Nazi aggression, Chamberlain and Daladier demonstrated that they had no interest in peace or in safeguarding Polish independence. They demonstrated that their sole interest was to further the imperialist designs of their own ruling classes. This remains their objective in the war, all pious talk about destroying Hitlerism to the contrary. The direct perpetrator of this second imperialist war is German fascism. But Chamberlain and Daladier, who fattened aggression with the raw meat of appeasement, must be held equally responsible with Hitler.

What of Poland? The semi-fascist "government of colonels," which strangled Polish democracy and which, from 1934 to March 1939, was under Nazi influence, helped dig the grave of Polish independence and condemned millions to Nazi rule. Only in what was western Poland, in the Ukraine and White Russia, have the people been saved from a similar fate by the action of the Soviet government. That Poland was never anything but a pawn in the larger British-French imperialist game is evident from the fact that the British and French refused to ease the pressure on their supposed ally by acceding to Poland's urgent request for planes and by a vigorous prosecution of the war in the West.

For the American people the course is clear. We must remain neutral and do everything in our power to keep out of a war which on both sides is being fought for imperialist objectives. This does not mean that we are indifferent to the menace of fascism. The vast majority of our people are united in their desire for the defeat of German fascism. But a defeat of fascism does not imply a victory for British and French imperialism. On the contrary, only by defeating the imperialist aims of their own governments and by ousting Chamberlain and Daladier can the British and French people ensure the destruction of the fascist dictatorship and the liberation of the German people. America can best aid the British, French, German and Polish people and most effectively serve the cause of democracy and peace by refusing to become a party to the imperialist plunder game of the Chamberlain and Daladier governments. We bear no responsibility for their war. Let us bear no responsibility for their "peace."

As Congress Meets

As this issue of New Masses comes off the press, Congress meets in special session to consider revision of the Neutrality Act. Already the isolationist batteries have opened fire with the statements of Senators Borah, Vandenberg, and Clark and Col. Charles A. Lindbergh, a gentleman who is supposed to be above the battle, though not too far above as to be out of reach of a Hitler medal. The advocates of revision have also been vocal, with Senator Thomas of Utah going so far as to say: "Let us give up this dream of impartiality, therefore of neutrality. It is better to take sides and fight."

The question of neutrality revision cannot be considered apart from the broader question of how America can best keep out of war and serve the ends of peace. The changed world situation as a result of the outbreak of the second imperialist war places the whole issue of neutrality revision in a new light. The Neutrality Act played a reactionary role at a time when it served as an obstacle to progressive objectives, operating to the advantage of the fascist aggressors. This was true in regard to Spain. It was true so long as a possibility existed of creating a peace front, including the Soviet Union.

The rejection of the peace front by the British and French governments, aided by the reactionary isolationists in this country, left the way open for Hitler's attack on Poland. Thus the imperialist character of the war which Britain and France, as well as Germany, are waging has converted neutrality revision into an unreal and essentially deceptive issue. Pro-Nazi big business interests fight to retain the present Neutrality Act and pro-British big business interests, whose palms itch for the profits of war, seek revision. Meanwhile the plain people of the country, on whom will fall the burdens of war should this country be involved, are being divided on a false issue when all their energies should

(Continued on page 22)

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A Cable from London

Richard Goodman wires in the English angles on the collapse of Poland's leaders. Chamberlain and Daladier at their double-crossroads.

London, Sept. 18 (By Cable).

THE belief that with the utter collapse of the Polish state and the Polish military machine the Soviet Red Army would take action to prevent the Nazis from completely overrunning Poland has been current here for nearly a week. Consequently what causes surprise is less that the Soviet Union has acted, but the speed and decision with which it launched its terrific anti-Nazi counterblow.

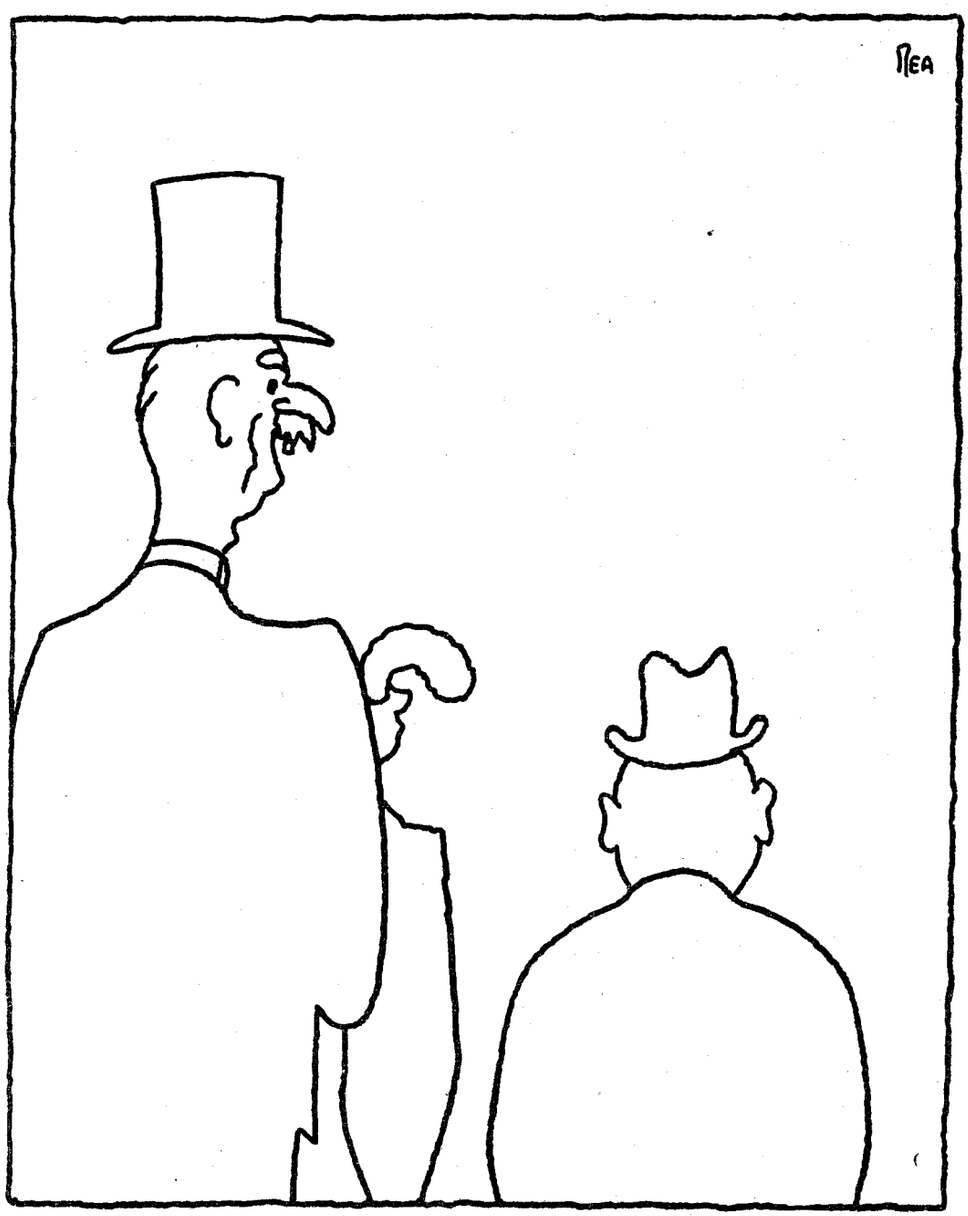
It is true that the majority of informed observers here and in Paris did not anticipate that the breakup of the Polish state and the Polish army would take place quite so rapidly. But it was known as long ago as last Thursday that not only were various units of the Polish army out of touch with one another, but that to all intents and purposes they were also out of touch with the General Staff, which in turn maintained but sporadic contact with the remnants of the government. Then on Friday came the news that many of the higher Polish officers were abandoning their posts and hurrying toward the Rumanian frontier. In many cases, therefore, Polish units fighting isolated actions were left unofficered. Singly and in groups, Polish planes began to seek refuge in Rumania and across the Soviet border.

Late Friday night, therefore, the perspective was opening of complete and rapid Nazi occupation of all Poland and the imminent transfer of at least fifty Nazi divisions to the Western Front.

The effects of the refusal of the reactionary fascist ruling clique in Poland to accept Red Army assistance and the failure of Britain and France to conclude a watertight defensive agreement with the USSR (which would have prevented war and Polish disintegration) were becoming obvious with a vengeance. In this situation the Soviet Union decided to act. From the very moment the former Warsaw government rejected the Soviet offer of help, the probability of Polish collapse and drastic Soviet action along the lines now taking place had, it is now known, been considered in Moscow. That explains the precautionary mobilization earlier this month in the western USSR.

The issue was simple: Were the Byelo Russians and Ukrainians in Poland to be Nazified and used as a source of intrigue against Soviet Byelo Russia and the Soviet Ukraine? Or were they to be reunited with the majority of their own people and freed forever of capitalists and landlords who had not only proved themselves incapable of defending them but had repeatedly in the past (in collaboration with the Nazis) tried to use the bourgeois nationalist elements among them against their fellow countrymen across the frontier? The Soviet government, whose supreme duty is to defend the socialist people of the USSR from capitalist encirclement and to defend the socialist base from every intrigue of counter-revolutionary forces, acted in the only way possible—by ordering the workers and peasants of the Red Army to march.

As I write, the advance, headed by monster tanks, is proceeding with amazing rapidity and clockwork precision. At 2:15 this morning the Moscow and Berlin radios announced that the Red Army was marching along the whole six-hundred-mile-long frontier from Latvia to Rumania and had occupied a dozen of the Byelo Russian and Ukrainian towns. Already, it appears, there is anxiety in Berlin. This anxiety is expressed in one of those significant little ways: by suppression in a Nazi broadcast of the sentence in the first Soviet communique which reads: "The Polish population are everywhere greeting the Red Army with jubilation." By the time this dispatch is published that will be old news. Let us therefore attempt to give a preliminary estimate of the importance of this development. First, it is necessary to recall what Stalin said in his letter to Ivanov about the final victory of socialism in the USSR and capitalist encirclement. Had Stalin's analysis of the international situation, as set forth in that letter, been taken as seriously as it was meant to be, there would have been far less stupid



Gardner Rea

"Well, Edouard, where do we go from here?"

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"mystification" and speculation about Soviet policy.

Ever since the coming to power of Hitlerism in Germany, and especially in recent years, the fundamental policy of the most powerful and most reactionary capitalist groupings in western Europe has been to use Nazi Germany as storm troops in an organized counter-revolutionary effort against the world base of socialism. Nazi Germany in Europe and military-fascist Japan in Asia have been encouraged to encircle the USSR. Hence the anti-Comintern pact on the one hand and the policy of non-intervention and appeasement on the other.

With the development of this policy it became more and more clear that whereas the role of the fascist powers was to do the actual encirclement and—had it come to this—intervention, the government of the oldest and most strongly based capitalist power was the active organizer of this encirclement. The last chance to abandon that policy came during the negotiations for a tripartite defensive pact this year. As is now well known, that chance was refused. The main task of socialist diplomacy was, therefore, to smash these encirclement plans. When, then, the Nazis went back on all their declarations and begged the USSR for a non-aggression pact, a unique opportunity was presented to the Soviet government. By its action the Soviet government not only lessened the danger of a Nazi attack on its territory, but split the fascist anti-Comintern bloc which threatened other states as well.

Turning its attention to the Far East, the Soviet government, after having given the Japanese another sound military thrashing on the Mongolian border, forced Tokyo to conclude a truce on Soviet terms. The plan to replace German-Japanese friendship by Anglo-Japanese friendship and use Japan as a storm-trooper against socialism in Asia was nicely nipped in the bud. Having so safeguarded its rear, Russia was more than ever free to deal with the counter-revolutionary threat to Soviet Ukraine and Byelo Russia.

Thus, within a few weeks, and acting with the directness and decision which characterizes proletarian diplomacy, the USSR has considerably weakened the capitalist encirclement and thereby strengthened its position as the world socialist base. The march of the Red Army is the logical outcome of this fundamental socialist policy, following the Polish collapse. That is the first point to be understood. The second point that must be understood is that the USSR, by its march into Poland, has definitely weakened Hitler's strategic position. Germany is now between two walls, one unassailable—in the East—and the other unshakable, if it wishes to be—the Anglo-French wall in the West. Deprived of the possibility of conquering all Poland and thereby directly threatening Rumania, the Nazis are forced to abandon their plan of consolidating an Eastern base and turning, strengthened by this consolidation, all their forces against the West.

It is true, of course, that one motive behind the present relatively mild official British reaction to the Soviet action is the hope that war may now develop between Germany and the USSR and that the latter will thereby pull British chestnuts out of the fire. That Hitler will do anything to bring the Red Army still nearer Berlin is, however, extremely doubtful. As the *Daily Telegraph* military correspondent, commenting on Russia's move, says: "That Hitler should have placed himself so much in Russia's power is an indication of how little Germany is ready to face a long struggle." Whatever happens, however, Germany will now have to maintain powerful forces in the East. This alone is assistance the British and French cannot fail to appreciate.

The opportunity, then, has been given the Western nations to finish with Nazism more rapidly than was conceived possible a week ago. Will they seize this opportunity, or will they adopt the position that in order to stop the advance of "Bolshevism across Europe," peace must be concluded as rapidly as possible? To judge from the conversations I have had today with working people, Britain understands the chance which the USSR has given her. This impression is confirmed by the tone of today's press, which—except, naturally, for the *Daily Herald* (British Labor Party newspaper)—is remarkably moderate and even appreciative. Here are a few extracts:

> Whatever the future may hold, two things are certain. The presence of the powerful Russian army on his eastern frontier will immobilize a large part of Herr Hitler's forces at a time when they are needed in the West; and Poland, brutally stricken to earth, will rise again.—*Daily Telegraph* editorial.

> It will be necessary for Hitler to maintain considerable forces there as a "precautionary measure" and to ensure Russia does not advance further. —Guy Eden, *Daily Express* political correspondent.

> In the Liberal and Labor press there are people scribbling furiously about Soviet "perfidy." Evidently they demand that the Soviet government should rest on frontiers imposed on it after the Polish-Soviet war of 1920, watch Nazi troops enter into the first provinces of the Soviet state and then proceed to organize ferocious pogroms against the Jewish population. The British people are for halting Nazism, not for permitting it to advance into western Byelo Russia or the western Ukraine. They are for an independent and democratic Poland, freed from all varieties of German and Polish fascism, but they will not risk their lives to restore Poland's right to rule over non-Polish minorities.—London *Daily Worker* editorial.

RICHARD GOODMAN.

Dead Before the Final Ultimatum

Between the ultimatum and the waltz
the house sky high and blood
on the remaining walls
Another ultimatum directly after tea
bewilders the survivors, fools the dead

"We warn you, Sir, etc.
"In this grave hour, etc., etc.
"All I have believed in, cherished, has been wrecked, etc.
"God help us all."
all said

But what about the man whose bread
was halfway to his mouth?
the child almost past the unprotecting door?
the stooped peasant straightening his back?
What ultimatum will the dead proclaim?
On what tomorrow rise in self defense?

"In this grave hour
"In his country's need
"Killed in line of duty
"Hero"
none of these apply

Not even patriotic theorems
to lime the sour earth that deafens, blinds, and gags
Honors wait only for the post-final-ultimatum corpses
the planned, braided, general-ordered slaughter
legal since the hour set by ministerial decree
The diplomats have never known, will never claim
these futile, unstrategic dead

The man, the child, the tired peasant die
and burial is brief in a one edition tomb

ALEXANDER F. BERGMAN.

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WAR BULLETIN: NUMBER THREE

The Polish Campaign Ends

Major Allen Johnson analyzes the British and French lack of aid to their treaty partner. The factor of dissident minorities. The collapse of the Polish command.

The attack upon the Polish nation has reached its final stage. The German armies hold the main industrial regions and have either broken or isolated the various sections of the Polish Army. No illusions should be retained as to the ability of the German armies to conclude the mopping-up operations within a relatively short time. A policy of absolute ruthlessness will enable them to break the main forces although sporadic guerrilla warfare within the occupied areas may continue for several months.

With an ultimatum by Germany to the beleaguered garrison of Warsaw, and with the fall of Bialystok, Lemberg, Kutno, and Deblin, it is definitely apparent that Polish resistance can no longer remain effective. It is even doubtful that any number of Polish troops could have fallen back upon the Pripet Marshes to continue a long drawn out guerrilla resistance with concomitant destruction and suffering for the civilian populations of western Poland. With the collapse of the Polish government, the withdrawal of its gold reserves through Rumania, and the evacuation of the main cadres of the administration to Cernauti in Rumania, the Soviet government has occupied White Russian and Ukrainian Poland. In these regions the bulk of populations are not Polish but Russians, Ukrainians, and, in the urban centers of Bialystok and Lemberg, Jews. To these people the coming of the Red Army represents deliverance from the horrors of further suppression and anti-Semitic pogroms. Had the occupation of Polish territory continued to the Russian border the possibilities of hostilities passing over into the Soviet Union existed. The Soviet move gives the USSR a better line of defense along the Bug River and shortens its western front by many kilometers.

In this entire situation no credit can be given to the leaders of the British and French governments for their aid to Poland. They have not done the one thing that might have given Poland at least temporary surcease—concentrated aerial operations against the Germans' most vital points of attack. Much has been said about the French operations in the Saar having caused the withdrawal of troops from Poland. Even if some troops were withdrawn, they were a very minor quantity. However, if it is true that French pressure did cause such a withdrawal and that this withdrawal was the reason for the slight slowdown of German operations a few days ago, may the British and French people not correctly conclude that really energetic operations would have been of considerable assistance to the Polish Army?

The Allied operations in the Saar Basin are not an offensive in the military sense. The French General Staff has carefully considered the military geography of the area lying between the Maginot and Limes defense lines. A study of this area reveals that along the southern stretch from the Swiss border to the Lorraine Gateway at the elbow of the French defenses the two lines are in close proximity. There is no room for maneuver except in the Vosges Mountains. This means that in this sector the French and Germans have been in constant contact and that because of the terrain features the stalemate is well advanced. From the Lorraine Gateway northward to the Burgundy Gate south of Luxemburg the lines of defense diverge, the German lines sweeping around the Saar basin and making the utmost use of the terrain features. In this basin there is room for maneuver. Since the German Army on this front has been on a strictly "passive" defense, the French Army has been able to occupy outposts and the territory it held in fee after the World War. So far it has only faced the outposts of the German defenses, a few scattered pillboxes and strong points with a minimal defense force. The German General Staff anticipated this and prepared for it by evacuating the Saar towns in advance. When the main German armies are freed from the Polish campaign the French will have an exceedingly difficult time holding the area they have so easily occupied.

BRITISH-FRENCH TACTICS

Taking the British official statements for what they are worth, the assumption must be that Hitler's overtures for peace upon the occupation of Poland will be rejected. The British official talks with the French Defense Ministry resulted in the following conclusions: (1) the war would be prosecuted as if it were to last three years or longer; (2) Germany would be harried on the Western Front without the Allies indulging themselves in grand attacks upon fortified defenses;

McGill

RESCUED. *The entire eastern half of Poland comprising six of the sixteen Polish provinces and half of two others are solidly Byelo Russian and Ukrainian in nationality. Forty percent of Poland's population of 35,000,000 live in those provinces. Half of Poland's Jewish population of 3,500,000 are in those provinces that have been saved from falling into Nazi hands. Two-thirds of the 150,000 square miles of the Polish empire were formed out of former Russian territory. But the area that the Soviet Union is reoccupying includes only that part of Poland which was wrested from Russia by the Treaty of Riga, plus the old Austrian territory of Eastern Galicia.*

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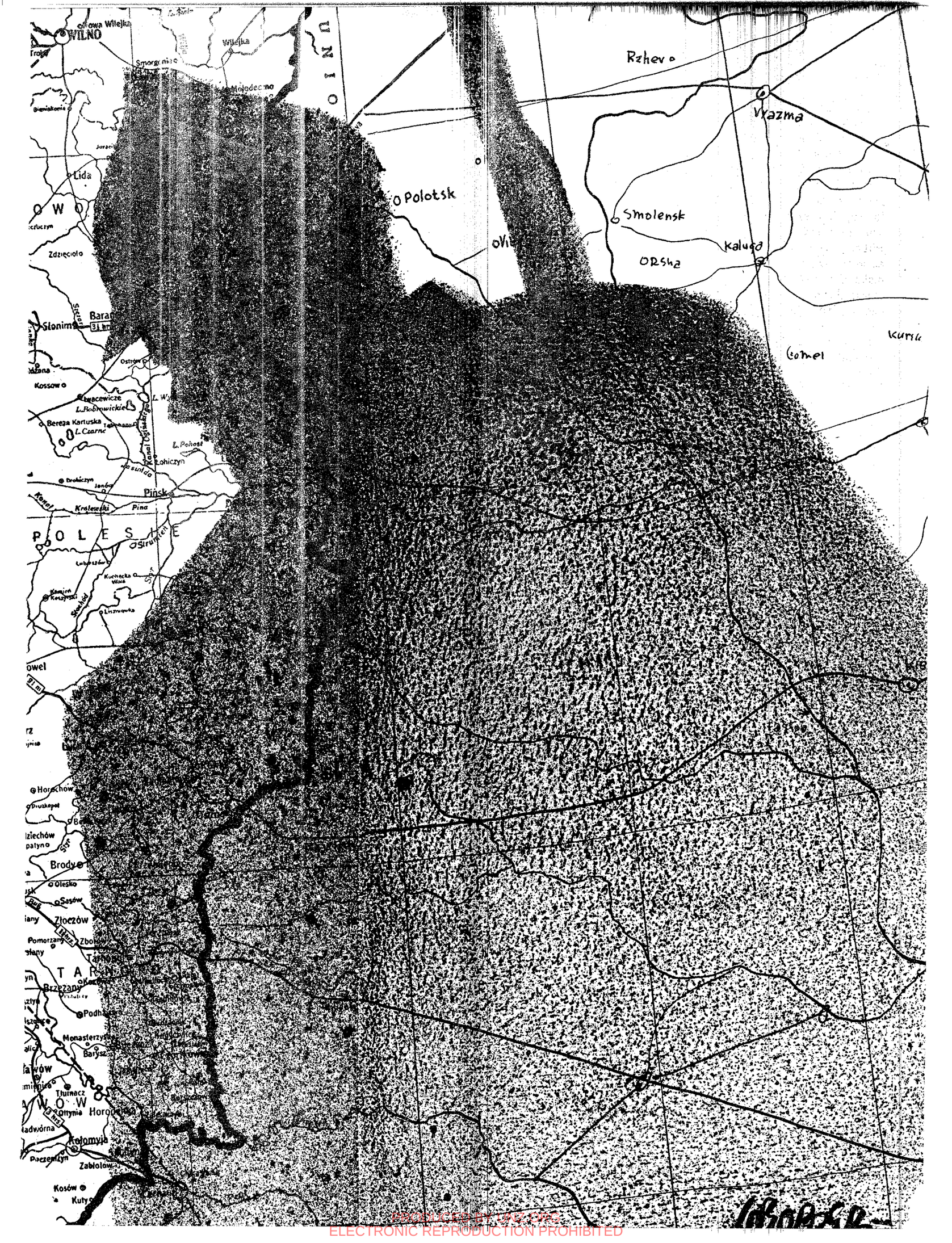

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(3) the Allies would try to find another front for such an attack; (4) full economic measures would be employed against the Nazis. Let us consider each of these points in turn.

First, once Germany has conquered Poland it will be in a position to put considerable pressure upon the Balkan and Baltic nations for supplies, especially in view of Mussolini's neutrality and the fact that the Italian press still emphatically insists that an *entente cordiale* exists between the axis members. This will make the war even more extended and increase the difficulty of carrying out Point 4. Second, harrying the Limes Line will not get very far once Germany's main forces are brought to that front. The condition of a stalemate will again ensue, as it did in 1917. Third, both the Allies and Germany will seek for another artery to bring about a decision. Germany, economically weaker, will take the initiative in doing this. It is imperative for her to do so as an extended conflict raises many internal problems which may get beyond the control of the Nazis—yes, and even of the British, who are just as afraid of such an eventuality as Hitler himself is. The Nazis are in this respect in a very good strategic position. They have surrounded themselves with neutral countries whose neutrality must be violated by the Allies in order to attack Germany.

POSSIBLE POINTS OF ATTACK

Where can such attacks take place?—(1) through Flanders, (2) through the Po Valley, (3) through the Rumanian plain and the Iron Gate. Other fantastic considerations such as the conquest of the Baltic sea by the British fleet and landing operations on the North Sea Coast of Germany would be so difficult as to necessitate discounting from the beginning. However, consideration must be given to the three possibilities mentioned. All three have been utilized before in European wars, all were zones of operations during the World War. Today the Allies and Germany must in each of these cases either (1) win the neutral nations in the paths of these potential offensives to their sides, or (2) violate their neutrality.

In the case of possibility number one, the first nation to violate the neutrality of Belgium and Holland will find these nations aligned against them. At present a great deal of pressure is being put on both of them by the Allies and the Nazis. The possibility remains that this may again become a center of decisive battles. In the second case Italy has shown that her interests are still with Germany. An important consideration is that if fascism is defeated in Germany it will give a terrific impetus to the democratic forces within Italy—and Mussolini understands this. Nevertheless the Fascisti are bargaining with the British and selling foodstuffs and material to the Allies and getting paid in *gold*—a very important war material, if Mussolini considers entering the conflict himself later on at the decisive moment. In the last case the German fascists and their satellites, Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria, are in a very favorable position to overrun the Balkans. The revisionist ambitions of the Bulgarians and Hungarians can be very effectively utilized by the Nazis in such a situation. With Turkey's neutrality and her great friendship for the Soviet Union it is doubtful whether she will be willing to throw in her lot with the Allied imperialist designs in the Balkans. On the contrary her influence has been one for strict neutrality—and the press seems to think that in this respect it has been decisive. The physical obstacles to Allied operations here in the face of the determined neutrality of the Balkan countries are insurmountable. But here too both antagonists are earnestly attempting to create allies.

Just as the Polish policy toward national minorities has been a serious obstacle to her defense, the policy of the British and French imperialists will raise for them, in the course of a lengthy war, many ghosts. In Ireland, South Africa, India, Palestine and Syria, are weak spots in the armor of the gigantic empires of the Allies. In all of these nations there are many unsolved problems based upon national independence and the self-determination of nations. Protestations of loyalty have been received from the people in these colonies who are anxious to receive the protection of the home governments, but little has yet been heard from the national revolutionaries and the masses of the peoples. One may be sure that the Nazis, the Italian fascists, and the Nipponese feudal-imperialists will not be slow to utilize to their utmost these areas of discontent.

MAJOR ALLEN JOHNSON.

Seawards

Once again the Fall of the year has come,
and memory flames suddenly as the hillsides
kindle, firing the furnaces of conscience;

When brigades of geese wheel southwards,
grain chokes the bomb-proof granaries of Europe,
and explosives bellow in the quarries of flesh;

Where stubbled battlefields still fresh
and damp with the passing of the scythe,
fragrant with the generous blood of wheat,

Receive the red harvestings of greater blades:

This is the season when vision bends
back with the turning of the leaves
towards our prodigal fatherlands where

Once again, vessels slip their cables,
plunging Eastwards for a newer India;
again lookouts hunger to raise our shore:

Where we whose seaward eyes still devour
the horizon load your now empty ships with
the hunger which was to have been wealth.

We load your ships with this warning—

Let the end come soon and not only with peace!
for without plenty there can never be peace;
while cabinets swing with the winds of war

And the flags of Empire ravel in the gale,
while weathervane ministers and merchants
eye the deposit vaults of neutral banks,

There will be neutrality towards aggressors
when crucifixion and arson are no longer crimes.
We who return your ships deep with this warning:

That even now we charter the fleets of responsibility.

JAMES NEUGASS.

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Emancipation in East Poland

Alter Brody unfolds the historical tapestry of the Ukrainian and Byelo Russian territories. A record of oppression, betrayal, poverty—and final liberation.

PREMIER MOLOTOV'S historic declaration is self-explanatory. Anyone who has followed Soviet-Polish relations from November 1917 to the present moment, anyone who is acquainted with the history of Byelo Russia and the Ukraine both before and after the Revolution, should not be hearing any "bombshells." But these "bombshells" are not of Soviet make. They are manufactured right here, out of fresh newspapers with fuses of radio antenna. If we had the hundreds of newspapers and the batteries of radio stations with which the capitalist world drowns out the truth about the Soviet Union, we would not have needed to "explain" the Soviet Union's non-aggression pact with Germany, or the renewal of the Soviet-German trade agreement, or the truce which the Japanese were compelled to beg from the Soviet Union after their crushing defeat in Mongolia. And we would not now have to "explain" the occupation of Polish Byelo Russia and Ukraine by their brothers of the Byelo Russian and Ukrainian Soviet Republics—*when the only alternative is to permit these long-suffering Russian workers and peasants to fall into the hands of Nazi Germany or some "protectorate" that it may set up in Warsaw.*

When the Polish government and its Anglo-French "Allies" rejected the offer of the Soviet Union to defend effectively the integrity of Poland and the peace of Europe, the USSR saw through the Chamberlain machinations and signed the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. Immediately the air was thick with rumors of a Soviet-German deal for a partition of Poland. The Soviet armies were going to march from the east and the German armies from the west and Poland would be crushed between the two. There was only one quarter where those rumors were not taken seriously and that was the quarter most concerned and in the best position to know the truth—the Polish General Staff.

THE POLISH GENERAL STAFF

Although the Polish General Staff had good reason for having a guilty conscience about the Soviet Union, although members of the present Polish General Staff had in 1920 led an unprovoked invasion of the Soviet Union when it was struggling for its existence against the counter-revolution and its Anglo-French backers, and had wrested the western parts of Byelo Russia and the Ukraine from Russia—nevertheless, the Polish General Staff knew with such certainty that the Soviet Union's pledge of neutrality was going to be observed to the letter, that, according to the New York *Times,* it left its entire nine hundred-mile Soviet border undefended and concentrated its forces to meet the Nazi threat.

The events of the past weeks are not yet history—so some of us can still remember them. Within a week the hollowness of the Polish state was exposed to the world, as was the perfidy of her deadly "allies."

Throughout these critical days while Polish resistance crumbled away and the Nazi armies were drawing nearer and nearer to the Soviet frontier, the forces of the Soviet Union mobilized on the other side of the border scrupulously refrained from intervention. The border was unprotected. Nothing prevented the Soviet forces from marching into Polish Byelo Russia and Ukraine where the native population would have hailed the mass deliverers. *But as long as any semblance of the Polish state, to whom it had pledged neutrality, existed on Polish soil*—the Soviet Union felt bound to wait—though the Nazi armies were not waiting and any day there was the danger of their occupying Polish Byelo Russia and Ukraine.

By September 17 all possible reasons for waiting had disappeared with the disappearance of the Polish state. The Polish government was no longer on Polish soil and the only spokesmen who presumed to speak for Poland were the Polish embassies in Paris, London, Moscow, and Bucharest. The Soviet Union had to choose between letting Polish Byelo Russia and Ukraine fall into Nazi hands or occupying these Russian provinces herself. It was then that the government took action and sent the Soviet Army across the border. It has been called "annexation," but what has happened is that these provinces have been reabsorbed by the Byelo Russian and Ukrainian Soviet Republics.

HISTORICAL ROOTS

Like all fundamental Soviet decisions, Molotov's act is deeply rooted in past Soviet policy. It can best be understood in the light of Soviet policy toward the border states that were formed out of the czarist empire.

The principle of self-determination which became an issue of the First World War as a result of President Wilson's famous Fourteen Points, was first promulgated as an immediate policy by the Soviet Union, and months before the Soviet Union existed, by Stalin in his report to the April 1917 conference of the Bolshevik Party.

Right after the Revolution the young Soviet state recognized the right of all the peoples of the czarist empire to cultural and political independence and even to secession if they so willed. It was the hope of the Bolsheviks—a hope not founded on wish-fulfillment, that the workers and peasants of these oppressed nationalities would seize power and organize soviet republics of their own, which would freely confederate with the All-Russian Soviets in Petrograd and Moscow. The Bolshevik hopes were realized. The liberated workers and peasants of the non-Russian nationalities such as the Finns, the Letts, the Esthonians, the Lithuanians proved as staunch defenders of the Revolution as the Great, Byelo, and Little (Ukrainian) Russians.

Poland was then occupied by the German army and had no opportunity to express its national will. Nevertheless, Soviet Russia officially recognized the independence of Poland—the first country to do so. The Allies had not officially come out for the independence of Poland, out of fear of antagonizing their czarist ally. The Austro-German plan for the independence of Poland was a protectorate consisting only of Russian Poland under the tutelage of Germany and Austria. Three months later when the Allies had given up hope of having Russia as an ally, Wilson published his Fourteen Points exploiting the Soviet slogan of self-determination to serve the Allied imperialist aims by breaking up the polyglot Austrian empire and by formally declaring for the independence of Poland. The Poles were the only ones of the oppressed Russian minorities whose independence was favored in the Fourteen Points but Wilson went out of his way to declare that "the Polish state shall include territories inhabited by indisputably Polish population."

CIVIL WAR

Meanwhile a social civil war raged throughout the soviet republics, fanned by the intervention in which Germany and its Anglo-French enemies collaborated while they were busy destroying each other on the Western Front. With the help of German and later of Allied intervention, the Workers and Peasants Republics of Finland, Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania were drowned in blood and native bourgeois dictatorships set up in their place.

Thenceforth these bourgeois dictatorships of Finland, Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania, together with the Pilsudski-dominated government established in Poland after German evacuation, became bases for the Allied intervention in Soviet Russia. The Allies, however, who still hoped to restore the old regime in Russia, refrained from recognizing the bourgeois Baltic states established on the ruins of the Baltic soviet republics. Least of all did they consider recognizing the independence of purely Russian ethnic stocks like the Ukrainians and the White Russians. In 1919 the Versailles Peace Conference, taking up the question of Poland's eastern frontier, fixed it provisionally on a line running through Grodno, Brest-Litovsk, Rawa Ruska, and

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Przemysl. This frontier, which fulfills Wilson's dictum about "territories with indisputably Polish population," completely excludes both Polish Byelo Russia and the Ukraine. The Polish imperialists continued to press their claims to Byelo Russia and the Ukraine on "historical rights," namely, that both these countries had once been subjugated by Poland.

Despite the fact that Poland and the Baltic states had become the bitterest enemies of Soviet Russia, the Soviet government, true to its originally enunciated principle of self-determination, continued to recognize their independence and their right to secession. Thus for several years there was the anomalous diplomatic situation that the Latvian, Esthonian, and Lithuanian governments were recognized by their Soviet Russian enemies, whereas the British and French governments, which were goading them into war against Soviet Russia, refused to recognize their independence and were planning to deliver them back to a counter-revolutionary Russia, if and when they were successful in crushing the Revolution.

SOVIET REPUBLICS

In the Ukraine and Byelo Russia, both of which are closer in nationality and language to Great Russia than Catalonia and the Basque Provinces are to Castile, separatist tendencies were weak even among the bourgeoisie. When the Germans evacuated Byelo Russia and the Ukraine under the terms of the armistice, soviet republics were set up in Minsk and Kharkov and the Red Army followed in the wake of the retreating Germans. This occupation of Byelo Russia and the Ukraine was under Lenin's leadership and no one then considered this fraternal union an invasion. When the counter-revolution hit the Ukraine, the Ukrainian bourgeoisie was split on the nationality issue. Some of them backed Petlura who, under a cloak of social-democratic phrases, was seeking to establish a Pilsudski type of dictatorship in the Ukraine.

But most of them rallied to the Denikin-Kolchak regime which had been provisionally recognized by the Allies. With the defeat of Denikin in 1919 the counter-revolution was liquidated in the Ukraine and the Ukrainian Soviet ruled as far as the Polish and Galician borders. Eastern Galicia, however, which is an integral part of the Ukraine, was seized by Poland during the Ukrainian civil war. In November 1919 the Allied Supreme Council, guiltily recognizing the non-Polish character of eastern Galicia, handed it to Poland as a mandated colony, stipulating local political and cultural autonomy and a plebiscite after twenty-five years. Needless to repeat, the stipulations were disregarded by Poland.

In the spring of 1920, while the Red Army was busy liquidating the counter-revolutionary remnants in South Russia organized under Wrangel, the Polish ruling class was set on by its French masters to attack the Soviets in the West. Not satisfied with the seizure of Ukrainian East Galicia, the Polish imperialists began to talk of a Greater Poland stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea and taking in all of the Ukraine and all of Byelo Russia. It is important to remember that in czarist Russia, though the Polish masses were oppressed, the vast holdings of the Polish nobility in Byelo Russia and the Ukraine were not interfered with. These estates were far larger than any in Poland proper and the most oppressed section of the Russian peasantry were the serfs of the Polish landowners of Byelo Russia and the Ukraine. It was the hope of recovering these vast estates, some of them larger than whole counties, that was at the bottom of the Polish ruling class' "historical claims" to Byelo Russia and the Ukraine.

POLISH INVASION

Despite the Soviet plea for peace, Poland declared war on Russia and invaded Byelo Russia and the Ukraine. By July 1920 the Polish armies had penetrated deep into Russian territory and captured Kiev. The fall of Kiev, antedating Novgorod and Moscow as "Mother of Russia," sent a tidal wave of patriotic fervor across Russia. Millions joined the Red Army, including thousands of czarist officers. The Red Cavalry under Budenny rolled back the Polish army from Kiev and pursued them five hundred miles to the gates of Warsaw.

In 1920 France and Britain rushed to the aid of Poland far more energetically than today. Three thousand French officers were dispatched to Warsaw and mountains of munitions that the Allied armies had left in France. At the same time General Wrangel was rehabilitated with French aid and ordered to create a diversion in the south. Caught between two fires, the ill-equipped Red Army, five hundred miles from their base, retreated —deciding to concentrate on their more dangerous foe, Wrangel. The Poles took advantage of Soviet preoccupation with Wrangel to occupy large sections of Byelo Russia and the Ukraine, and, under the terms of the Treaty of Riga, Russia was compelled to cede these territories to Poland.

THE "NATION" THEN

While the peace negotiations were going on, the Red Army crushed General Wrangel, the last of the White fuhrers. Commenting jubilantly on the Soviet victory our liberal contemporary, the *Nation,* declared editorially (December 1920): "The delegates of the Soviet government ought to use their recent victory to force a bloodless revision of the terms of that 'punic peace' with Poland which hands over millions of Russian peasants to a handful of Polish landowners." I hope that the editors of the *Nation* will reread this editorial before committing themselves on the present liberation of these very same Russian peasants by the Red Army.

Since the Treaty of Riga, western Byelo Russia and western Ukraine have languished under the Polish yoke. On the Soviet side of the border the Byelo Russian and Ukrainian peoples had their own independent Soviet Republics with the freest political and cultural autonomy. Byelo Russian and Ukrainian culture bloomed under the sun of Soviet stimulus. Thousands of new schools and universities in which Byelo Russian and Ukrainian languages took precedence over Russian as the mediums of instruction, were built by the local Soviet republics. In Byelo Russia, because of the large Jewish population, Yiddish was made an official language, on the same footing with Byelo Russian in the local schools. Under the five-year plans the Byelo Russian and Ukrainian republics became rich and prosperous. The Soviet half of the province of Volynia produced more beet sugar in 1938 than the whole of Poland.

On the Polish side of the border the Byelo Russian and Ukrainian masses were oppressed and Polonized by force. A systematic effort was made to uproot the Byelo Russian and Ukrainian languages and discourage the development of a native intelligentsia. Polish was used as the medium of instruction in the local schools and the efforts of the Ukrainians to organize their own cooperative schools were sternly dealt with. But worst of all was the ruthless economic exploitation by the absentee Polish landlords. In 1930 the Ukrainian peasantry revolted under the unbearable Polish yoke and the revolt was crushed with such cruelty that it reached the attention of the League of Nations.

POLISH RULING CLASS

The Polish landlords, however, were not satisfied with the exploitation of the eleven million Byelo Russians and Ukrainians on their side of the border. Though the Soviet Union scrupulously refrained from interfering in the internal affairs of Poland, the Polish ruling class never gave up its hope of conquering the rest of Byelo Russia and the Ukraine, federated with the Soviet Union. Until the rise of Nazi Germany, British and French imperialism counted on Poland to be the spearhead of their projected attack on the Soviet Union. One of the reasons for the inability of the Polish army to offer any serious resistance to the Nazi army is the fact that the Polish army was primarily organized as an adjunct to a contemplated Anglo-French attack on the Soviet Union and specialized in a cavalry force for operations in the Ukrainian steppes. With the rise of Nazi Germany the Polish ruling class was alarmed at first. But instead of coming to terms with their oppressed Byelo Russian, Ukrainian, and Jewish minorities and cultivating friendly relations with the Soviet Union, they lulled themselves into a false security with dreams of playing the jackal to the Nazi lion in an attack on the Soviet Union. It is a horrible historical injustice that the Polish people should have to pay with their independence for the cynical policies of their corrupt rulers.

ALTER BRODY.

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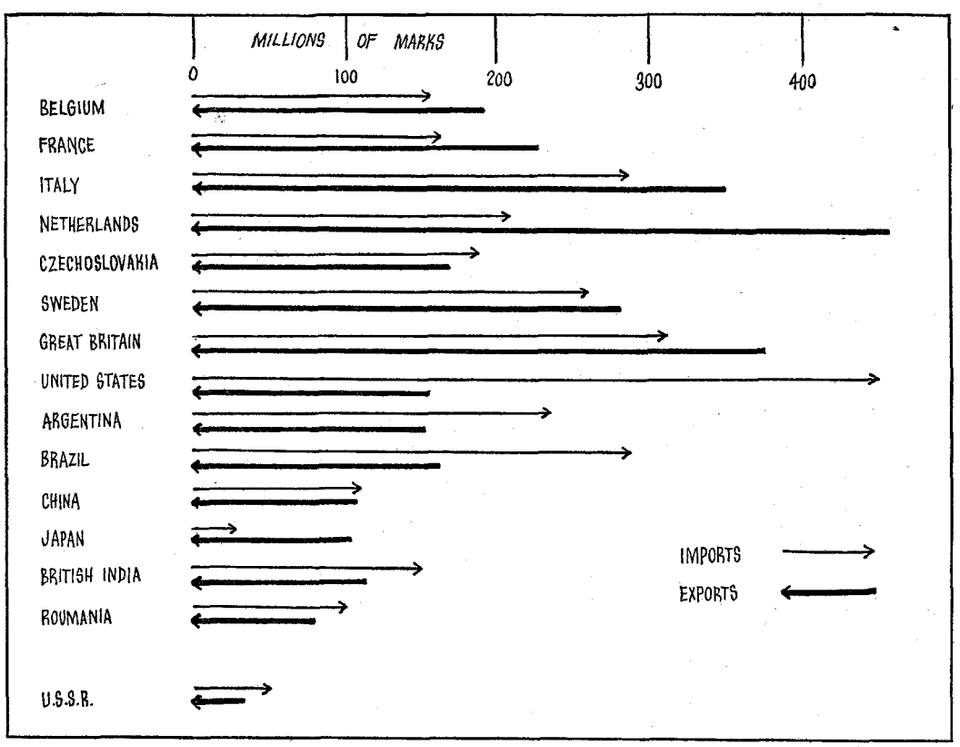
Soviet-German Trade Data

Some impartial statistical weapons to point at hysterical Munichausens. The facts about the Soviet's revolutionary commercial policy.

WHILE Chamberlain is waging his non-aggressive war on Nazi Germany, our pro-Chamberlain press is conducting an aggressive campaign against the Soviet Union. The fury of the umbrella brigade at the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact and the Soviet-German trade agreement which split the contemplated London-Berlin axis might be amusing reading if many friends of the Soviet Union were not so woefully ignorant of the basic facts involved. The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact is of course pictured as a sinister military alliance, though Britain and France had signed just such a treaty with Germany eight months ago—and judging by the war bulletins, it seems to be still in force. The renewal of the 1935 trade agreement between Russia and Germany—the only way by which trade of any kind could be conducted between two countries, both of whose foreign trade is government-regulated—was seen as part of the same sinister military alliance, placing the vast resources of the Soviet Union at the disposal of the Nazi war machine. The grain of the Ukraine, the ores of the Urals, the timber of Siberia, which Hitler longed for impotently all these years are suddenly given to him by generous American journalists and radio commentators.

What are the facts and what are the fancies about the Soviet-German trade agreement? The fancies are spread out in the columns of our newspapers and are dinned into our ears by the radio commentators. The facts require a visit to the reference department of the nearest public library. But the *Statesman's Yearbook,* from which many of these facts have been collated, is not only to be found in public libraries. It is on file in every one of the editorial rooms, embassies, and consulates which are now busily fabricating lies on the subject.



Darryl Frederick

GERMAN TRADE. *Imports and exports according to figures from the 'Statesman's Yearbook' statistics. The Soviet Union is in thirty-fifth place among countries trading with Germany.*

The chart on this page is drawn from *Statesman's Yearbook* figures on German imports and exports for 1938. The total German imports and exports in 1938 were 5,500,000,000 marks and 5,250,000,000 marks respectively. The Soviet Union is not listed in the yearbook's table of the leading countries that trade with Germany, as its figures of 52,000,000 and 33,000,000 marks (shown on the chart, however) for imports and exports give it thirty-fifth place among the countries that traded with Germany in 1938. These figures constituted roughly less than 1 percent of the total German imports and ½ of 1 percent of German exports.

A glance at this chart and the table demolishes the whole mountain of lies that have been heaped over the Soviet-German trade agreement. Among other things, these 1938 figures prove that at the very time when Ludwig Lore of the New York *Post* and others were conducting a poison pen cam-

German Imports from the USSR and Exports to the USSR

Year	Total German Imports in Million RM	Per Cent of Total German Imports	Place in German Imports	Per Cent of Total Soviet Exports	Place in Soviet Exports	Year	Total German Exports in Million RM	Per Cent of Total German Exports	Place in German Exports	Per Cent of Total Soviet Imports	Place in Soviet Imports
1929	425.7	3.2	9	23.3	1	1929	353.9	2.6	12	22.1	1
1930	436.3	4.2	5	19.8	2	1930	430.6	3.6	12	23.7	2
1931	303.5	4.5	5	15.9	2	1931	762.7	7.9	4	37.2	1
1932	270.9	5.8	3	17.5	2	1932	625.8	10.9	2	46.5	1
1933	194.1	4.6	4	17.3	2	1933	282.2	5.8	5	42.5	1
1934	209.0	4.7	3	23.6	1	1934	63.3	1.5	19	12.4	2
1935	215.0	5.2	3	18.0	2	1935	39.3	0.9	26	9.0	3
1936	93.2	2.2	19	8.6	3	1936	126.1	2.7	13	22.8	1
1937	65.2	1.2	30	6.2	5	1937	117.4	2.0	19	14.9	2
1938	52.8	0.9	35	...	..	1938	33.6	0.6	41	...	..
1939*	9.1	...	..	...	..	1939*	12.1	...	..	...	..

* January to May

American-Russian Institute

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paign about a swelling Soviet-German trade, it had fallen to a level where the Soviet trade with Germany was lower than that of any other country of consequence. But the primary value of these 1938 figures and percentages is that they can serve as an officially authenticated yardstick by which we can measure the figures involved in the present Soviet-German trade agreement.

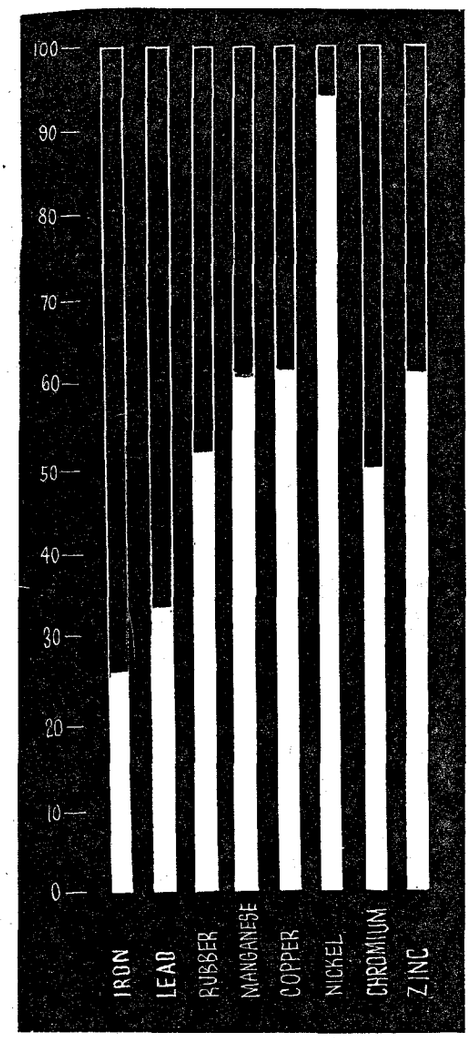
EXPORTS AND IMPORTS

According to the present agreement Germany is to export 200,000,000 marks of goods to the Soviet Union in two years and import 180,000,000 marks of goods in the same period. This means imports and exports of 100,000,000 marks and 90,000,000 marks annually—or $40,000,000 and $36,000,000 respectively. Now $40,000,000 and $36,000,000 sounds like a lot of money but compare it to the total German imports and exports of $2,200,000,000 and $2,100,000,000 (5,500,000,000 and 5,250,000,000 marks) and it takes on its proper proportions.

According to the trade agreement German imports from the Soviet Union will rise from approximately $21,000,000 (52,000,000 marks) to $36,000,000, or almost double. German exports to the Soviet Union will triple—from about $14,000,000 to $40,000,000. These sound like impressive increases, but they are double and treble a percentage that is close to zero. In 1938 German imports from the Soviet Union were less than 1 percent of its total imports. Under the agreement they will increase to less than 2 percent. In 1938 German exports to the Soviet Union were a little more than ½ of 1 percent of its total exports. Under the agreement they will increase—to less than 2 percent. The charts show that by the terms of the present agreement Soviet-German trade will approximate in volume and percentage the figures of 1937. And in that year, when Soviet aid was the chief obstacle to fascist domination of Spain, no one accused Stalin of being Hitler's helpmate.

THE MYTH OF COOPERATION

One of the reasons why myths of Soviet-German cooperation find such ready acceptance is the persistence of a strange economic anachronism. It is the idea that Russia and Germany are "economically complementary." That the average radio commentator, whose ideas of history, geography, and economics are about as accurate as a medicine man's idea of medicine, should glibly repeat this old rubric is understandable. But it seems that even our learned liberal contemporary the *New Republic* has not heard of the three five-year plans. Thus Bruce Bliven can speak cavalierly of Russia and Germany "being a logical economic unit, with German heavy industry and Russia's vast agrarian resources." This statement was no doubt true of czarist Russia and of the Soviet Union before the five-year plans. But if Mr. Bliven will take the trouble to look up the boring statistics on that subject he will learn that



Darryl Frederick

ENGLISH AND FRENCH AID. *Percentage of German imports of basic war materials from Great Britain and France up to the declaration of war, according to Raymond Daniell's dispatch from London in the New York 'Times' of Sept. 17, 1939.*

in this second year of the Third Five-Year Plan the industrial production of the Soviet Union already equals that of Germany and is second only to that of the United States. The fact that the Soviet Union imports certain types of machinery and technical equipment from Germany and exports certain raw materials does not necessarily mean that Russia is an undeveloped agrarian country waiting for German industry to fructify it. It happens that German-American commerce is more or less of the same nature.

USSR'S TRADE INDEPENDENCE

It is precisely because the Soviet Union considers it economically dangerous to be overly dependent on any one country for any particular kind of imports that it has persisted in maintaining normal commercial relations with Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. By distributing its imports among as many countries as possible it is not only able to get better terms but to forestall any serious dislocation of its industrial machine resulting from a political blockade or embargo by one or a group of capitalist or fascist powers. Recent events have proved the wisdom of this precaution. This week Soviet newspapers reported that paid shipments of British machinery and rubber destined for the Soviet Union have been suddenly held up by the tory government without any excuse or explanation. For several years the Soviet Union had been shifting its orders for machinery from Germany to Britain. If the Soviet Union were exclusively dependent upon Britain for machinery imports it would now be in a very vulnerable position.

In its early years the Soviet Union broke the embargo with which the capitalist nations hoped to strangle it by exploiting their economic rivalry. Many liberals seem to have forgotten that period. But the Soviet Union is still young enough to remember its lesson.

PAUL G. MCMANUS.

Satan's Toe Hold

How chauvinism enhances the value of real estate is revealed in a suit recently entered in the N. Y. State Supreme Court. In the midst of the fashionable Satan's Toe area of Edgewater Point on Long Island Sound, David Wark Griffith, producer of the anti-Negro film *The Birth of a Nation,* owned thirty-two acres of land on which he used to make movies. In this day of evacuation of millionaire estates, Mr. Griffith had small chance to sell his property. Rumors began to be heard in Edgewater Point that Father Divine was planning to buy the Griffith plot to build one of his "Heavens." Rich Republican neighbors began to worry about the Divine menace and as their worries increased so did the asking price of the property. Public-spirited Neal R. Andrews, head of a Satan's Toe real estate firm, began bidding for the property because, as he claims in his suit, Mr. Griffith and former Rep. Woodson R. Oglesby threatened "to sell otherwise to undesirable people, to colored people."

In 1937 Andrews purchased what he thought was all of the land, but soon learned that Griffith and Oglesby had withheld a small plot and still held the threat over the Satan's Toe Jim Crow. Andrews charged the pair then sold the bit through a dummy titleholder to a Harlem citizen. Andrews is suing Griffith and Oglesby for the money he paid for the land.

Guns Not Privies

The iron comfort stations in the streets of Vienna, a social convenience common in Europe, disappeared a few days after the declaration of war. They have been replaced by wooden ones.

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The Wrath of Dies

The big idea behind the Congressional Red hunt. You can kill a people's organization quicker in wartime than you can in time of peace.

THERE'S a Washington corollary to the phrase "it's later than you think"—Martin Dies is smarter than you think. Yes, the blond and beefy Texan is a more potent enemy to everything progressive in America than the Shirley Temple story might indicate. To minimize this fact would be like shutting your eyes to the existence of Hitler's tanks.

Martin has a bee in his bonnet.

To be sure, he is just as interested as he ever was in smearing the New Deal and in pasting a Red label on every progressive organization in the country. But visions of something bigger and more sensational are floating through the Dies brain as he gazes dreamily at the witness seated on the other side of the long inquisitorial table.

You can almost see it take form as he suddenly and irrelevantly interrupts Committee Counsel Rhea Whitley to drawl a question of his own at an official of the Communist Party.

MARTIN'S VISION

The vision, to Martin's way of thinking, is a grand one. War is here, he reasons. You can do many things in war that you can't do in peacetime. In the last war didn't they bundle all the socialists and pinks and honest objectors off to jail? Then what's to stop us from doing the same thing to the Communists in America? Not now, maybe. A little later.

That's the shape of it. Benjamin Gitlow drones an endless fantasy of glittering jewels —perhaps the czar's own—which he said enriched American Communists. Counsel Whitley unfolds a tedious story of Communist bookkeeping and bank transactions. Dies gazes at the ceiling, at the floor, over the witness' head at the windows. Only occasionally does something immediately relevant to the testimony catch his interest.

"Now tell me, Mr. Browder," he asks, "if the United States went to war with Russia. . . ."

Patient and unruffled, the Communist general secretary explains that he refuses to assume that the United States could become an aggressor nation; that in any war in which the United States was the victim of aggression he would do his duty as a citizen to defend it, no matter who the aggressor nation might be. Dies gazes at the ceiling and slowly chews his gum. The questioning reverts to the line it had taken before the interruption. Something about passports.

THE DAR IS PUZZLED

A bugeyed delegation of ladies of the DAR fidgets on the first five seats of the front row in the old House caucus room. They find it difficult to follow a simple explanation of financial transactions by William Weiner, Communist Party financial secretary. Or they titter at a "witticism" from the smirking J. B. Matthews, strikebreaker and fink-extraordinary, who has been so useful on the committee's payroll.

Dies seems a little distracted, even annoyed, if other committee members press too many questions along the lines of factual testimony. The reason is that Dies grasps a point that the others seem to have overlooked: there is no factual piece of evidence concerning the Communist Party or any piece of hokum disclosed by the political termites unearthed by "J. B." that will ever do Dies any good. His committee has one "value" and that is the ability to smear through insinuation, a fact which becomes a weapon against progressive causes by virtue of a friendly press. But there is one kind of testimony that shakes the committee chairman out of any listlessness. He swings forward in his swivel chair. The gum-chewing stops. He leans across the table and grips his gavel tightly. An example came on September 7 just after the noon recess.

FABLE-SPINNER GITLOW

Benjamin Gitlow, a chum of Jay Lovestone's, who was expelled by the Communists back in 1929 and who embellished his tale by posing as a former general secretary of the Communist party—an office he never held—had been telling the crown jewels yarn. Dies seemed a bit impatient, afraid the fable wouldn't click with the papers. Then J. B. Matthews took Gitlow out to lunch. I watched them in the corner cafeteria, hearing only hisses as "J. B." leaned across the table and gripped his knife for emphasis. After lunch, the testimony took a devious and sinister turn. Matthews looked benignly on as Gitlow opened up. Communists are and always have been, he said, conducting "espionage" against the United States. The scowl on the chairman's face relaxed. This was more like it!

Sure, Gitlow went on, there was espionage and furthermore there was sabotage. Dies was beaming by now. Not too obviously, mind you. His countenance was just bathed in satisfaction. Gitlow warmed up to his subject. A vast network for espionage and sabotage probably exists, he said. Communists tried to get their agents into all the vital industries. Particularly the chemical industries. Gitlow was sure about that.

"How about the armed forces?"

Sure, into the armed forces. Any place. Every place. The country was crawling with them. The endless Gitlow monotone droned on in the hushed chamber as Dies' pencil raced across his note pad and an occasional gasp escaped the ladies in the DAR section. But before you can put all the Communists in concentration camps you have to know who the Communists are.

HE WANTS NAMES

"Would not the branches of the party be a good place to carry on espionage and sabotage?" Dies asked.

"Yes, certainly," Gitlow obliged. A half-dozen times before Dies sought to discover how he might get lists of Communist Party members. Each time he had been told by Communist Party officials that membership lists were kept in the branches. Get it? Branches have membership lists. Branches conduct "espionage and sabotage." Thus a truth plus a lie become the posts and the barbed wire for future American concentration camps.

This does not mean that Dies has forgotten that his larger aim is against the New Deal. Far from it. It simply means that he foresees a possible war hysteria that may serve his means even better. He would like to see this hysteria come quickly and he is helping it come. He wants the illusion of a great alien menace to sweep the country carried along by rumors of espionage and sabotage. And the definition of what a Communist is would, of course, be fixed by people like Dies.

It is certain that a great part of this is over the heads of most of the committee members. J. Parnell Thomas, ruddy-faced little Red-baiter from Frank Hague's domain, was too anxious to get in gratuitous swats at the New Deal to get the point. Joe Starnes of Alabama was so burned up trying to find out how "Moscow financed" the Southern Conference for Human Welfare last fall that almost everything else seemed to float past him. Joseph E. Casey, New Dealer from Massachusetts, seemed to be honestly seeking information and Dies' fine subtleties were lost on him. Jerry Voorhis of California couldn't get around his confusion—that's the kindest word to use—about the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. And Rep. John J. Dempsey struggled along with it for a few days and then went home to New Mexico.

But Dies was different. "J. B." had put him straight on everything. He had read the reports of the Seventh World Congress, the *Communist Manifesto,* and a little of Dimitrov's *People's Front.* He knows about "transmission belts" and plenums and a few quotations from Lenin and all manner of things that a representative of the Oil Boys back in Orange County might seem to have little use for. But Martin knows better. Martin has a bee in his bonnet.

ERNEST MOORER.

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Poll Tax: Denial of Democracy

William Pickens factually exposes that Negroes are not the only sufferers from vote bans. The poor of all corrupt states have no means of alleviating their lot.

IN A time like this democracy should seek to find all its enemies and destroy them —especially the enemies within its own system. This need is incidentally acknowledged by the fact that six years of aggressive fascism have brought forth more speeches and writings on the subject of democracy in the United States of America than were made in the entire previous generation. Some have come to realize that democracy is a process and a continuous aim, not a fixed state of bliss. We do not have democracy, but we pursue it, and after 150 years of the pursuit, we must still go on. Some of the most powerful hindrances are within our ranks.

The poll tax, which some of the ex-slave states have set up as a prerequisite to the right to vote, is one of the most dangerous and effective of these internal enemies. One of the best indexes of the reality and the effectiveness of democracy is the percentage of the vote-age population that actually votes, or that is at least eligible and registered to vote. The broad basis of our American democracy is manhood suffrage, which means that every citizen out of jail and out of the insane asylum, and who has not been disfranchised by his own crimes, has the same primary power in our government that any other citizen may have—namely, the right of suffrage at the polls, where all governmental power originates and where every question of government may be finally answered and settled. This ideal of manhood suffrage has often been embarrassed, most often by property interests. There was a time when the owner of one hundred slaves could vote for three-fifths of his slaves; that is, he had sixty-one votes as against a non-slaveholder's one vote. Manhood suffrage has also been sometimes limited by landholding qualifications and taxpaying qualifications.

THE NEGRO AS A MINORITY

After the Civil War, amendments to the Constitution freed and enfranchised all inhabitants, including the ex-slaves, for whom the amendments were really made. The Negro was a minority in all the ex-slave states except two, and because of the handicaps of poverty and ignorance he could have no real dominance even in those two. The amendments meant only that he would participate in government as a minority. But the ex-slaveholders, despising equality of power, soon disfranchised the blacks by violence and tricks and other methods inimical to democracy, and later sought by legal statutes to make this disfranchisement appear lawful and remain as permanent as possible. These schemes, while practically disfranchising the race, could not disfranchise all the individual Negroes in any state, because the Fourteenth Amendment forbade the making of any law which in its own language aimed directly and avowedly against the rights of any race. So a few Negroes could hurdle whatever legal barriers could be set up; if it were education, some Negroes would be educated; if it were unreasonably high education, like Greek and calculus, a few Negroes could meet the test. The Negro race could be greatly handicapped but not utterly ousted.

> NO GREATER issue faces the Southern states today than the question of abolishing the poll tax for voters where it exists. Nullifying the great sacrifices of the Civil War and the emancipation program of Abraham Lincoln, the poll tax today disenfranchises both Negro and white alike. Like feudal serfs, the poor voters in the discriminating states await a national effort to make them free to vote freely to defend their own welfare.

For example, the ex-slave was in the economically poorest group, and therefore any burden laid upon poverty would catch a greater percentage of the Negro race. Most of the ex-slave states therefore enacted poll tax laws, requiring the payment annually of a head tax of $1.50, or more, by each person of voting age, before he could register. This put a price upon the ballot and a handicap upon poverty, inasmuch as a small annual tax which is nothing to a millionaire may be quite a burden to the poor citizen. This is an undemocratic tax, laid not upon the property but upon the "heads" of men; it conditions an equal right upon very unequal sacrifices. It would be a vicious tax even if it hadn't the purpose of handicapping a hindered race.

HARD ON THE POOR WHITES

This anti-Negro measure hurts as many, perhaps more, poor whites than poor Negroes, for although the Negro is poorer as a group, the white group which is so much larger in numbers has a larger number of poor, in almost every state. In Georgia and Alabama, while the more numerous whites have nearly all the wealth, only a small minority of the whites have it. In a fair application of a poll tax law, almost as many whites as blacks would be disfranchised. But nobody expected a fair application of the law: the lawmakers perhaps expected the white registrars to take care of the matter when a poor white applied for registration—but in this the lawmakers reckoned without taking into account the inevitable fights among the whites themselves. These internal fights among the white factions would increase, as soon as the Negro was safely out of the running: those who were in office would try to stay in, even if they had to apply this drastic poll tax law against any white man who wanted to vote for those who were out and trying to get in. After eliminating the Negro, the whites began to eliminate each other. And behold the result today: in Mississippi where 1,500,000 ought to vote, only 150,000 actually do so; and in South Carolina, where 1,300,000 ought to vote, only a little over one hundred thousand voted in the hottest national election, 1936. The disfranchisement of Negroes was only the forerunner of the disfranchisement of the whites —especially the opposition poor whites. Neither social good nor social evil can be bound by a color line.

HOW MANY PEOPLE VOTE?

Let us see what this poll tax evil is doing to democracy. In eight Southern states with poll tax requirements only 16 percent of the Constitutionally eligible voters voted in 1936. In all the rest of the country, excluding these poll tax states, and even including the other Southern states which use other tricks to disfranchise many of their citizens, 61 percent of the eligible voters voted. Eight poll tax states had over fifteen million people over twenty-one years of age, but cast only 1,500,000 votes. The non-poll-tax states had 67,800,000 possible voters and cast 42,446,000 votes. Democracy is not perfect anywhere but it reaches its lowest depths of imperfection in these poll tax states. While the poll tax states alone cast only a 16 percent vote, the republic as a whole, even including these undemocratic states, managed to cast a 53 percent vote. The reader can figure it out for himself: seven-elevenths of the population is twenty-one years old and over, of voting age, and in a 100 percent democracy ought to vote. Measure that seven-elevenths against the part of the populations that actually voted in 1936 and you get: for South Carolina, 9 percent; for Mississippi, 11 percent; for Arkansas and Virginia, 13 percent; for Alabama and Georgia, 15; for Texas, 21; for Tennessee, 26. All of these are abysmally below the national average of 53 percent, and further below the non-poll-tax average of 61 percent.

And this failure of democracy does not affect the eight disfranchising states alone: it affects the entire nation by embarrassing the cooperation of the states, especially in the Congress of the United States. Think it over: one vote in South Carolina or Mississippi may counterbalance seven or eight votes in Connecticut or Iowa. South Carolina may have the same number of representatives in Congress and the same power in the nation as some Northern state which has the same popu-

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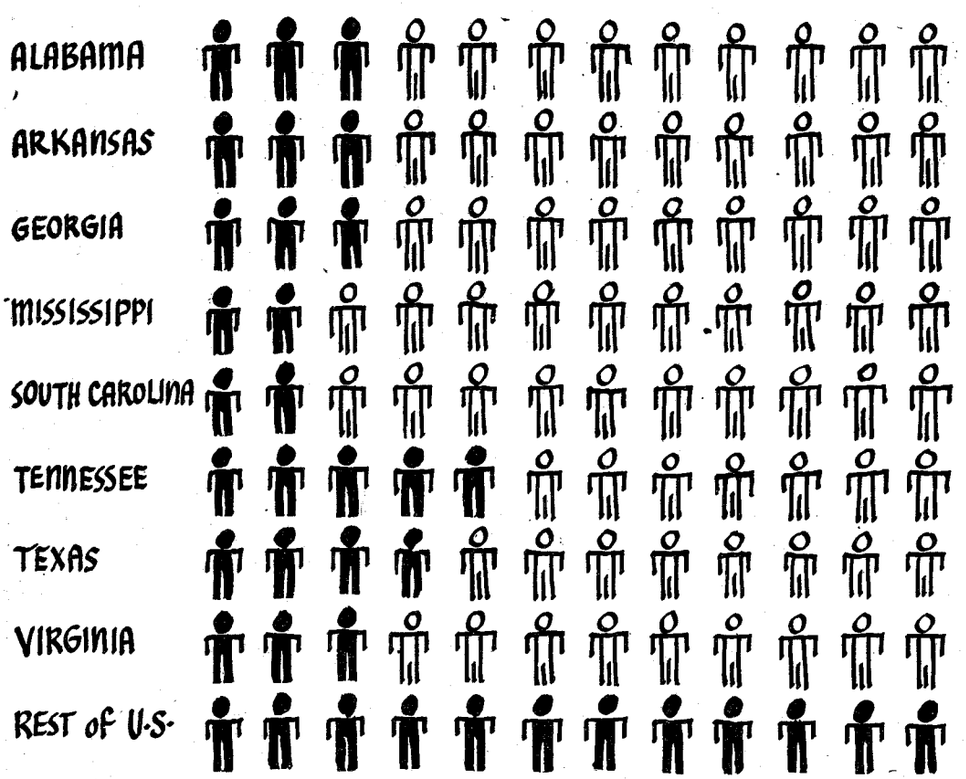
lation as South Carolina, and yet for the exercise of that power the Northern state must cast 700,000 votes while South Carolina is casting but 100,000. This imbalance is a great disturber if not an absolute destroyer of national democracy and republicanism. Besides, it is much easier to corrupt one voter than to corrupt seven or eight; much cheaper to buy one than to buy seven; safer to attempt coercion on one than on eight. In permitting the suppression of the Negro voters, the white voters of the South who have survived the process have weakened their own local power as a mass vote, and have put a correspondingly greater power into the hands of their political bosses and national representatives. If representation in Congress were made proportional to the votes cast back in the states, the poll tax states would lose about five out of every eight of their present Congressional votes, and would be politically emasculated. Since the states now vote in Congress according to the primary votes cast at the polls, the poll tax states not only destroy their own democracy but weaken the democracy and republicanism of the entire nation—which republicanism the Constitution directs the federal government to protect.

UNCONSTITUTIONAL

The Negro people constitute a small minority of the South as a whole, and the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution make it a poor policy for the white masses to permit their leaders to menace all the people of all the races by efforts to discriminate against this minority. These amendments make it Constitutionally impossible to discriminate against any race openly and avowedly, by statute or ordinance. And even if Constitutional law did not forbid it, the laws of human nature would forbid it: for it is not mere pleasing eloquence but a statement of science to say that the only way in the world for one man to keep another man down is to stay down on him. If a law is to disfranchise Negroes, it must, in order to be Constitutional, *permit* the disfranchisement of whites.

And if there were no Constitution, such legislation would still tend to deprive poorer whites of their citizenship and disfranchise them, by making them of less consequence to the masters of society. Black slavery is an illustration: when Negroes could be forced to work for nothing, whites could be forced to work for less. Thousands of illustrations could be given to show that natural and social laws cannot be made to respect race and color lines.

But if there were no race traditions in this country, or only one race to be considered, a head tax on the right to vote would still be an abomination to democracy: it would reverse the source of political power, as if the government could sell the citizen the right to vote, instead of receiving from the citizen the only right which just government can have to govern. It destroys sovereignty by exacting tribute. It opens the door to endless corruption: candidates have been known to pay up back poll taxes for enough individuals to carry a close election. It causes white and black alike to lose respect for the ballot, and no longer to regard it as a right or privilege and a duty of the man and citizen.



POLL TAX VICTIMS. *Voting in the eight poll tax states compared with the rest of the country in the last Presidential election. Each figure represents 5 percent of the eligible voters. The national average excluding these eight states was over 60 percent (shown on the chart), and including them, 53 percent.*

WHAT REPEAL WILL DO

The abolition of the poll tax will not, perhaps, straighten out all the political crookedness of these poll tax states, but it will be a long step in the right direction. It will remove one coat of legal respectability from the undemocratic spirit and further expose it as the outlaw which it is. There will still be places in South Carolina and Mississippi where the gun and the rope will seek to frighten Negroes from the polls and where even poor whites will be bullied or cheated if they disagree with the dominant party. But this outlawry will have lost one of its legal excuses and can be more definitely opposed by the democratic spirit of the South and of the nation. A growing number of Southern statesmen and Southern newspapers are opposed to this prostitution of law in that section. But how can a 100 percent bad law be improved except by its repeal? As an outlaw it can be much more effectively fought. It is not necessary to ruin democracy for all the people in order to keep a minority in its proper place in society; the rules of democracy itself, while offering Constitutional protection to the minority, guarantees adequate control to the majority. When Florida repealed its poll tax nuisance in 1937, its vote increased more than 100 percent in the next election—but they still have a white governor down there, because the whites, who want a white governor, are far in the majority. Even in Alabama, where there is the worst poll tax law of all, calling for the payment of all unpaid back taxes from the age of twenty-one up, voices are heard for "revision." When they start revising, they will find that the only ultimate revision is abolition, if they are to become a democratic state.

LESS CORRUPTION

Even Carter Glass of Virginia, though he softens his conviction in a multitude of words, means to say simply that the poll tax by lessening the vote makes for corruption and that an extension of the franchise would lessen corruption. He does not go on to say that the abolition of all race, class, and property limitations on the franchise would give it the greatest "extension" and incorruptibility—but he cannot prevent us from thinking it out. And many Southern editors are trying to allay the unnatural jitters attendant upon such discussion by observing, in so many words, that the majority can never be outvoted by a minority, a hopelessly minority group, even if the South should become really democratic.

If democracy is to live in America, the poll tax as a suffrage prerequisite must go the way of the "grandfather clause," the state-supported "white primaries," and other insidious enemies of the democratic system.

WILLIAM PICKENS.

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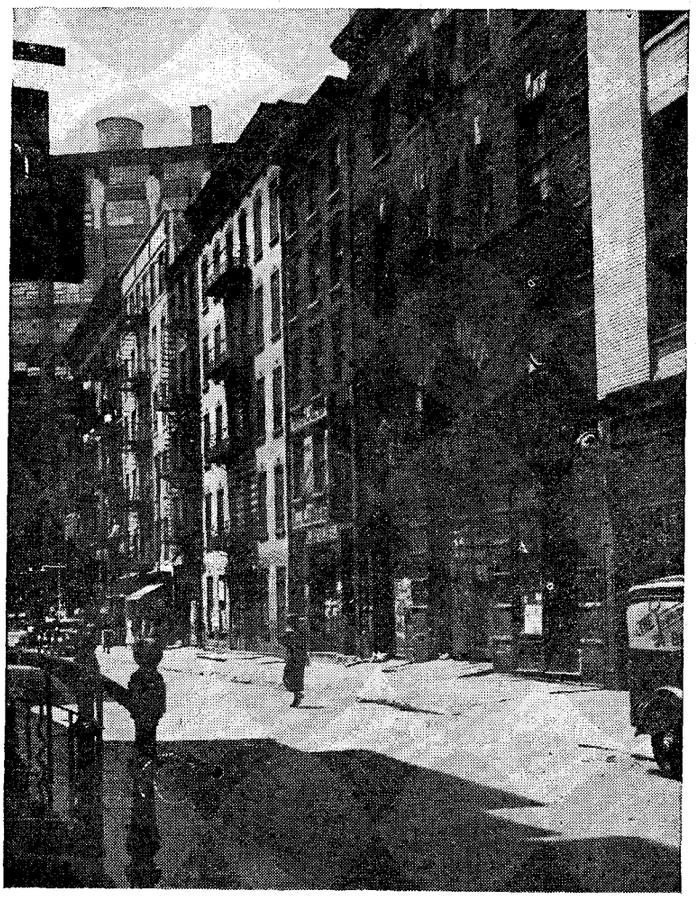
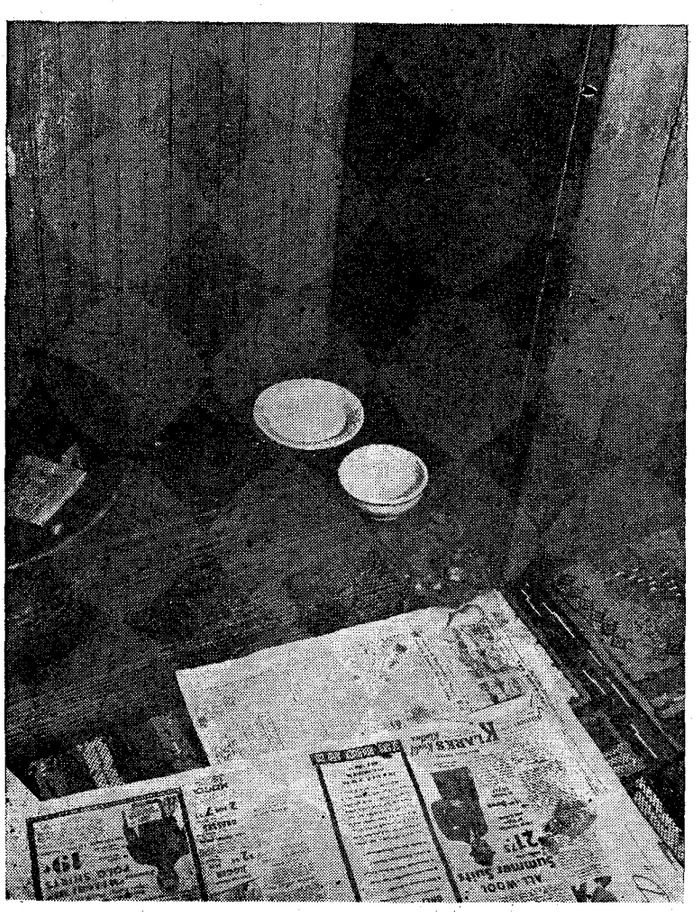
Portrait of a Tenement

ON October 1, hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers will move from one unsatisfactory set of homes into another set, equally unsatisfactory. These eight photographs are part of a series made by the Photo League, which includes among its membership many of the country's leading documentary photographers, in one of New York's thousands of "old law" tenements. The imperative need for a gigantic low-cost housing program for American cities, typical of which is New York, can be seen on every hand. Moving day brings this problem home with a vengeance.

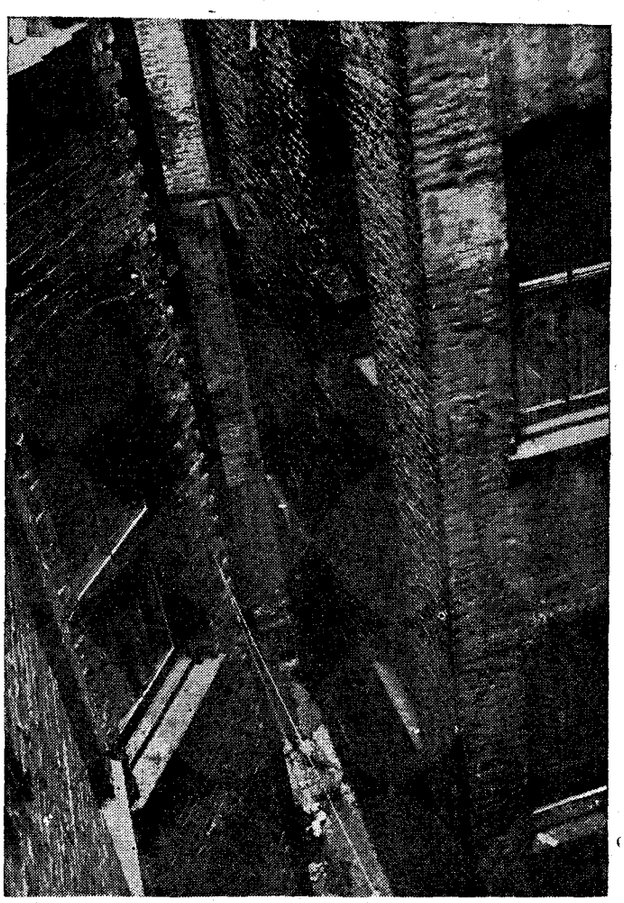


The Street

The Curb



The Cat's Corner



Close Neighbors

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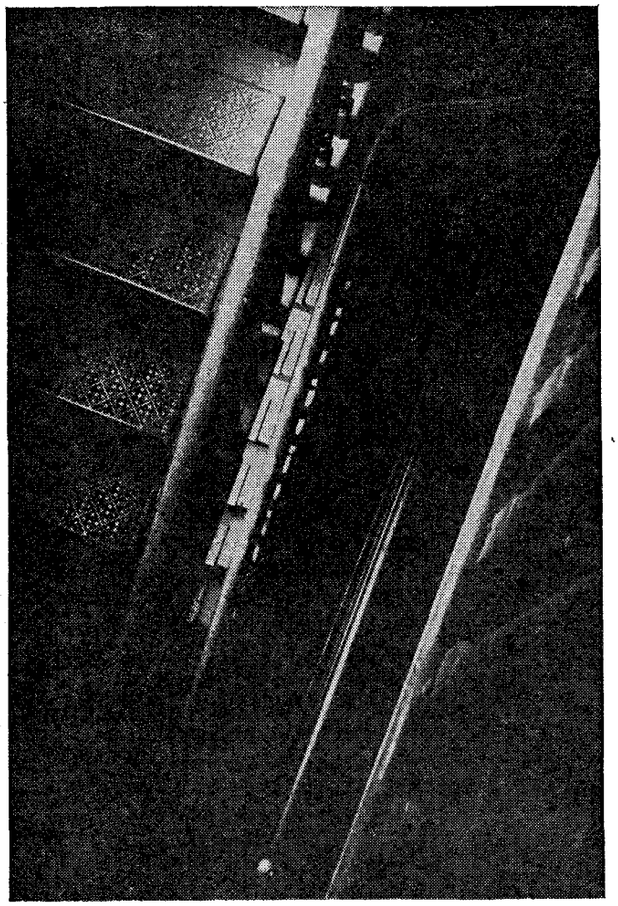
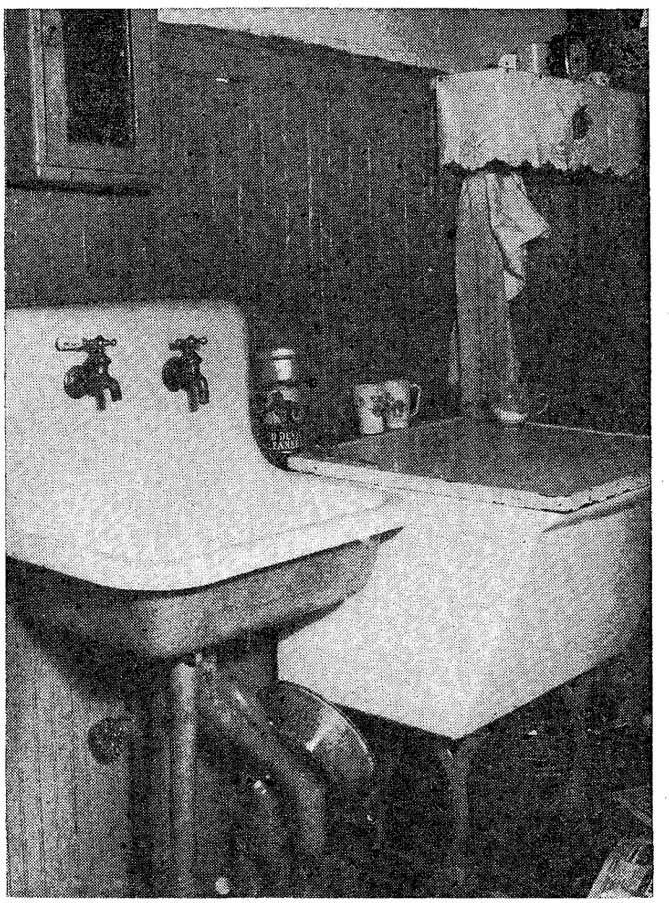
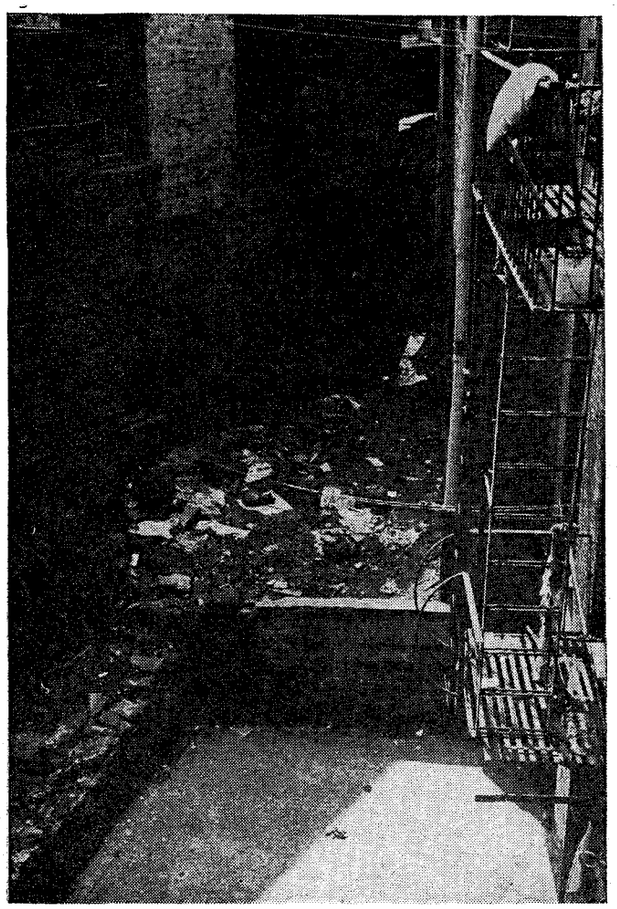


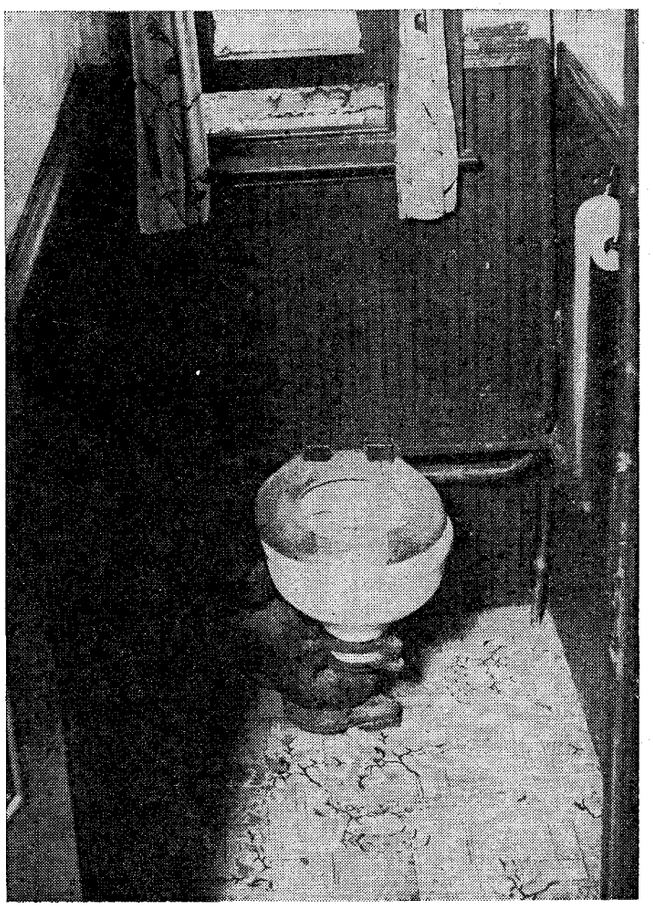
Five Flights Up



Kitchen, Bath, and Laundry



View from the Rear Window



In the Hall—Shared by Three Families

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Duranty's "Kapital"

Moissaye J. Olgin examines the limping wit of Walter Duranty. A hangover of the non-aggression pact.

MR. WALTER DURANTY, for many years a correspondent in Moscow, has made his contribution to the press campaign against the Soviet Union in connection with the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. Mr. Duranty is considered an authority on Russia, and the New York *Times* Magazine of September 3, where his article on the pact appeared, introduces him as a "close observer of the Russian experiment and the European scene." His thesis is that there is a growing resemblance between Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany and between Hitler and Stalin. Hence the ingenious conclusion that "the evident parallel offers infinite possibilities of cooperation between the two dictators." Let us examine Mr. Duranty's argumentation.

The Nazi system, he says, "undoubtedly began as an attempt to save by force the shaking edifice of capitalism," but "it has moved and is still moving into a phase of capitalist-statism which is not much different from the present system in Russia." If this means anything, it means that Nazism started with a desire to strengthen capitalism but that the reverse has taken place because "there is in Germany a gradual absorption of capitalism" by the state. In Russia, it appears, Bolshevism started with an attempt to destroy capitalism but now it has moved back to something like state capitalism, or, to use Mr. Duranty's uncouth terminology, "capitalist-statism." The thesis is not original, but it shows that Mr. Duranty is virginally innocent as regards understanding the nature of capitalism, the nature of socialism, the nature of Nazism.

WHAT IS CAPITALISM?

Capitalism, Mr. Duranty, is a system wherein private individuals and their combinations derive profit from the labor of others who are thereby exploited. In capitalism, Mr. Duranty, one class exploits other classes. This is A B C, Mr. Duranty, but it is not our fault that after so many years in Russia you still do not know such simple things. In Russia there are no private owners, either manufacturers or landlords or bankers, there are no private profits at the expense of others' labor, and there is no exploitation. In Russia there is no class division any more, since the two remaining classes, workers and collective farmers, are both toiling classes akin to each other and exploiting no one. You were misled, Mr. Duranty, by the fact that the Soviet state owns all the plants, the transportation system, the credit system, and the natural resources. You call it "capitalist-statism." You are mistaken. The state in this case is *organized classless society*. Means of production and distribution managed for the benefit of the people by organized classless society—that is socialism. There can be no other socialism, Mr. Duranty, and you who have lived in Russia ought to have learned at least this—that the sphere of socialism is widening with the abolition of the remnants of private production and distribution for profit.

How about Germany? Never mind the strong Hitler administrative machine. Never mind the catch phrases you may have heard somewhere. Look at the fundamentals (if you can grasp these matters). In Germany the big industrialists and bankers are not only very much in existence, but their corporations are much more powerful than they were before Hitler. The big landowners are also very much in evidence and their grip on agriculture is strong. Have you, perchance, heard something about the German Dye Trust, the German Steel Trust, the United German Iron and Steel Manufacturers, the Dillinger Foundries in the Saar, the Germania Dockyards in Kiel, the Chemnitz Automobile Corp., the Coal Syndicate, the Reichs-Kredit-Gesellschaft, etc.? Have you heard the names of Krupp, Thyssen, Voegler, Hugenberg—the Rockefellers and du Ponts and Morgans and Fords of the Reich? Do you happen to know that the Dye Trust alone made in 1938 a profit of over 200,000,000 marks? Are you aware of the fact that whereas in 1928, the peak year of pre-Hitler prosperity, the 33,463 corporations with a capital stock of more than 1,000,000 marks each made a total profit of 2,500,000,000 marks, in 1936, only three years after Hitler's coming to power, a reduced number of such corporations, namely 29,434, made a total profit of 3,700,000,000 marks—an increase of 48 percent? Do you understand that this means that the big corporations grew bigger and richer? Do you know that this tendency has been accelerated in the last years? Does that look like the "absorption" of capitalism by anybody or anything?

You have been misled by the fact that the Nazi state machinery taxes the capitalists (much less than the workers, Mr. Duranty!) and acts in a highhanded manner. But isn't it strange, Mr. Duranty, that that Hitler machinery does *exactly* the things needed for big business? It has crushed the labor unions, forbidden strikes, increased the labor day, abolished civil liberties, is suppressing protests on the part of the masses, has created a huge army and is waging an imperialist war to secure more *Lebensraum* for capitalist exploitation.

Do you know what you are talking about, Mr. Duranty?

This being Mr. Duranty's economic foundation, one can imagine the beauty of his "superstructure." In justice to Mr. Duranty one must record, however, that he does not even attempt to establish any link of logic between the above "base" and the "superstructure" of psychologizing about Stalin.

Hitler is a "self-made man," says Mr. Duranty, but "Stalin was an opportunist." Do not ask for proof. Mr. Duranty prefers to play the oracle. But is Stalin's continuous struggle against rightist and leftist opportunists in the USSR and on a world scale a sign of opportunism? Stalin was an opportunist, says our oracle, but "the circumstances of his position forced him to apply his opportunism gradually and carefully." Stalin worked out plans and guided the work of abolishing the NEP, industrializing the country, collectivizing agriculture, strengthening the defenses, developing culture, and making the socialist country one of the most advanced in the world. Is that "gradual opportunism," Mr. Duranty? Stalin is "moving towards unlimited power"—but isn't he the author of the highly democratic new Soviet constitution through which the *people* decide upon the major affairs of state? Stalin was tolerant to his enemies until 1934, says our oracle, but then of a sudden he introduced "a merciless era"—but isn't it because the enemies passed *from words to action,* as signified by the assassination of Kirov? Stalin is guided "by his judgment of what the traffic will bear"—if that means he won't introduce premature reforms and won't take unprepared steps, then this is a compliment. If it is designed as a condemnation, what does it mean? What "traffic" and what must it bear? But Hitler and Stalin, says Duranty, "have arrived at such limitless heights of power that both may venture to say that they are their own ideologies, the font and origin of everything their followers should and must believe." Both "may" . . . Stalin "may" . . . But does he? Does Stalin demand any of the weird things Mr. Duranty pictures? Hasn't Mr. Duranty heard perhaps that Marxism-Leninism is still the ideology of the USSR? Mr. Duranty tears to shreds the cobweb of his own oracular absurdities when he adds, immediately, "But I decline to suppose that Stalin's hard core of realism has melted into such madness." These words mean, if they have any sense, that Stalin is *not* "his own ideology," that he is *not* the arbitrary origin of what his followers should think. If that is so, why the "may"? Why the whole tirade when it is denied right away?

THAT "RUSSIAN SOUL"

One could pick out many other lovely details in this queer word weave. Mr. Duranty generates all kinds of statements with amazing nonchalance. "The Russian is an intensely individualistic creature"—this, one must suppose, is conclusive explanation why the Russian has collectivized all phases of his life. "To the Russians, White or Red, the English rank as enemies and the Germans as friends"—an arbitrary statement, to say the least. The White Russians love Hitler and Chamberlain and the Mikado and are enemies of all the

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peoples. The Red Russians hate the Hitlers and Chamberlains and have friendly feelings towards the Germans, the English, and other peoples. The "Bolshevist principle," proclaims Mr. Duranty, is "that all men are equal, without any distinctions, and that only those should rule who have proved their merit." That is as far from Bolshevism as Mr. Duranty is from understanding social problems.

Mr. Duranty finds that the Soviet-German pact is proof that "The Red and Brown revolutions can be merged." But his explanation limps pitifully. From the German side, he says, active cooperation with Russia is easy. Why? Because "the Germans are working for world hegemony." This, we must believe, is the reason why they have agreed not to molest the biggest country in the world, the biggest obstacle to their world domination. Queer logic. As to the Russians, Mr. Duranty confesses that he is entirely at a loss. "Where do the Russians come in? Do they expect to make gains for the Red International? That is excluded by the postulate of a German victory. Do the Russians, then, expect to share in Germany's glory? What share could Russia get?" Mr. Duranty does not understand—but he tries to explain, nonetheless.

What understanding can anybody get from such grotesqueries? What has impelled a man to throw together such fantastic nonsense? Is he so utterly ignorant or is he the victim of somebody much shrewder than himself?

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN.

Don't Be a Sucker

CONSUMERS who may be wondering if they shouldn't stock up before wartime prices put simple necessities out of reach of their present incomes would do well to consider the six point guide to buying laid down in the latest issue of Consumers Union *Reports*. Dr. Colston Warne, president of the organization, gives the following purchasing advice:

1. Do not stock heavily with foodstuffs at present advanced prices. Remember the large surpluses in many agricultural fields.

2. Do not be rushed into the purchase of mechanical or electrical equipment by the argument that we are immediately headed for runaway inflation. Remember that prices cannot be sustained on a much higher level in competitive lines unless there is substantial reemployment.

3. Watch the clothing and shoe markets with great care. Dealers are very differently situated as to inventories and as to commitments to sell goods of a given quality at stated prices. Mail order houses, for example, are less apt to reflect sharp upswings than hand-to-mouth outlets.

4. Expect price declines in a number of fields in which European countries will be unprepared to take their usual quota of exports. Remember that in 1915 many prices dropped.

5. Don't join in the general commodity speculation. You may be burned.

6. Keep an eye out for sudden price rises bearing the marks of manipulation; and give whatever support you can to efforts toward making the government afford protection against price manipulators.

An Answer from Below

A short short story by the author of "The Heroes" and "The Outward Room."

LEN CANEEL, heading for the viaduct, walked around the front of the capitol building. He stopped for a minute and looked up at the pillars of the building, white, big, with evening sun on the upper part of them. Cars were parked nearby; probably soon men would come out and drive away. Legislators. Why didn't they legislate jobs? He looked at the white pillars, then began to hear the loud, terribly loud sound of cicadas in every tree. He could not think now why he had come here and began to walk quickly away.

When he reached the viaduct, it was just about sundown. He walked out a way and stopped and looked out over the dark valley down across the James to South Richmond. There was a great deal of smoke in the valley. Buildings, the C&O station, black with smoke; trains sounded. He looked for a while just at the valley, at the pavement of tracks, tobacco factories, at the spread of buildings, chimneys, the wide black floor curving up to Church Hill. He felt it again—there was activity there, but something was wrong. He could see factories he knew were closed or on one, two days a week. He could see where he had worked. He was hungry.

He had something worse than hunger in him. It was for that he had come here.

He looked right down below him. Thirty or forty feet below him was a cobbled street. His palms felt wet.

A girl came towards him from the other side of the viaduct. He had been looking down; he looked up. The girl stared for a moment into his eyes, then put her hands against her blue dress over her breasts and began to run. She never stopped running until she had passed him and reached the end of the viaduct and solid ground.

He thought, She saw it. She saw I was going to kill myself.

Again he looked down at the cobbled street. His palms began to dry.

On the left was the city jail almost under him; he could look right down at its roof, walls, and netted windows. Along the street by the jail ran a whitewashed fence, the only halfway clean thing in the valley. The fence went around a small baseball diamond on the far side of the jail. To the right of the street was the hillside that rose sharply to the upper city; shacks reached down it, shacks in which Negroes lived. They were no worse than any others Negroes lived in, paintless, blackened, with windows and doors like holes into the dark. They were exposed to the whole sweep of the valley, its tracks, factories, darkness, and smoke.

The sun was down now and the night was rapidly thickening in the valley. Yet he could still see everything plainly.

There were two Negro shacks at the head of the cobbled street that went directly up from the jail. Two Negroes, a man and a woman, came out and walked down to a wall. They stood at a corner of the wall, which was built above the street, and the woman called and a voice answered her. The answering voice came from the jail. A man in the jail and the woman and sometimes the man with her talked together, calling and sometimes having to repeat what they said. He could hear the sound of the voices clearly. All of them, the woman and the two men, and a few other voices that joined in from the jail, were friendly and good-humored. In a little while the man by the wall went back into the shack but the woman stayed. She called a few times and then stopped calling and lifted her arms and began to do something with her hair. There was a green shed behind her and even though it was getting dark, she could be seen plainly, her strong body, her dark arms lifted to her black hair. She stood there a moment and then she too went back into the shack. When she was gone, one of the men in the jail began to sing. Soon other men's voices joined in, harmonizing; the voices came out from the jail clearly as though it were hollow, the voices came out of the whole building. The men in the jail sang a song and then they stopped and it was entirely silent again. There was nobody but him on the viaduct and it was silent there and it was silent below.

The trains kept on shuttling back and forth on the tracks not far from the jail and the shacks. Every time they passed, torrents of black smoke swept up towards the hillside below him.

He looked at the darkness, the night, and the smoke. A light came on, hanging from a pole halfway up the cobbled street to the shacks. He saw it come on, saw it begin as a minute point of light and gradually grow. It was like a star coming out. After it was out, he looked around and saw the valley filled with lights and a chain of lights stretched across the bridge.

His hands were dry now. He felt calm. He walked back towards the city.

MILLEN BRAND.

Hermann's Bathing Beauties

FAT Hermann Goering told Berlin munitions workers recently, "I do not deny that many things will not be as good as originally. Clothes made from cellulose manufactured from potatoes may not be of the best. But is that decisive? No, if necessary we will walk about in bathing trunks."

And hang your clothes on an *Ersatz* limb.

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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(Continued from page 4)

be joined for efforts to keep America out. In a statement published in the September 19 issue of the *Daily Worker* the National Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. declares:

> Hammering out a real peace program for the United States, one that will really guarantee keeping America from involvement, we must keep two guiding thoughts in mind: First, allow no single measure to be taken for purposes of giving American help to either side of the imperialist conflict; second, find the most effective means of keeping out of war, without any regard to whether these means incidentally happen to confer some small advantage to one side or the other. These two guiding thoughts are inseparable; in every concrete issue, they will help us decide what is best for the American people; neglect of one would soon destroy the effectiveness of the other.

The Communist statement also points out that the question of China is entirely different and that American national interests "demand all possible aid be given."

We believe this is a realistic attitude. As NEW MASSES has previously emphasized, indispensable to any effective peace program for America is the maintenance and extension of New Deal social reforms and of basic civil liberties.

These are grave times. The opiate of war propaganda is being administered to the American people in large doses. Let's keep our heads and unite for peace.

Japan Backs Down

IN THE midst of war in Europe the Soviet Union and Japan agreed to an armistice in their "vest-pocket war" on the Manchukuo-Outer Mongolia border. Fine, says the man in the street. There'll be peace in at least one corner of the globe. But believe it or not, the American big business press frothed and fumed at the idea. Which lends point to Premier Molotov's remark that the gentlemen who write such stuff "are just as much enemies of peace as all other instigators of war."

Of course, all kinds of sinister meanings are being read into the armistice. The facts are too simple for the journalistic warmongers.

Hostilities began in May when the Japanese attacked the Outer Mongolian border. They have now ceased because the Japanese fire-eaters, weakened and isolated by the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, have decided that they have had enough.

From Tokyo have come denials of press reports that a non-aggression pact is contemplated. But should Japan decide to sign such a pact—which the USSR first offered her in 1931—it would mean just one more victory for the Soviet government.

For the Chinese people the end of the threat to their brothers of Outer Mongolia can bring nothing but satisfaction. Sunday's New York *Times* reported that "Chinese semi-official circles professed to see no danger to Chinese in the agreement, saying that the present good relations with Russia, which has been a source of Chinese war supplies, were unimpaired." The Chinese people know that the USSR is their firm friend and that, thanks to Soviet policy, they face today a weaker Japan than they did a month ago.

Shipping

WHO rules the waves? Britain has lost to German U-Boats some 130,000 tons of shipping, including the huge aircraft carrier *Courageous*. Admiralty counterclaims offer no proof of the destruction of enemy submarines. Twenty thousand tons of neutral shipping have been sunk by Nazi subs and minefields: Britain has destroyed fifteen thousand tons of German sea commerce; and undisclosed damage was wrought in the air raids on Wilhelmshaven in the first days of the war.

Feeling Out the Plot

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S war reports to Parliament have a corporation report style, saying virtually nothing in a guarded way, as though six of the vice-presidents had just absconded but the ledger had been mended to cover. Mr. Chamberlain is in "close touch," as the French army is in "contact," but certain bits of fact peep through the latest one. He has had, for instance, "a direct and personal exchange of views . . . on the present state of public opinion in the two countries [France and England]" with M. Daladier. Public opinion, he reports, is "in complete accord." On what? Our guess is that public opinion was "in accord" against the two Munichers' stubborn hopes for a mutual action with Hitler against the USSR.

The Looseleaf Empire

THE Union of South Africa and Canada were tardy in declaring war for Mother England. It is hard to convince a farmhand in Saskatchewan that he owes his life to Chamberlain's investments. In India, garrisons have been strengthened, there has been no declaration of war, and shrewd Mohandas K. Gandhi has called for Britain to liberate India as "an honest action to implement the declarations of faith in democracy made [by Britain] on the eve of war."

The Seamen Act

THE National Maritime Union has been quick to act to protect the seamen who risk their lives running the cargo of war profiteers. The union has tied up such shipping until the shipowners agree to pay an adequate war risk bonus; a life insurance policy, premium paid, for each seaman; and agree to extra union personnel to provide for the extra duties of a ship's crew in belligerent zones. British, Scandinavian, and Greek seamen in New York have joined the union's battle.

A Soviet Sea World

LAST winter the startling news went unnoticed that a Soviet freighter, without unusual icebreaking equipment, had crossed from Vladivostok to New York, almost entirely above the Arctic Circle, opening up a trade route traditionally thought impassable. No Nazi submarines are expected to venture into the Northern Soviet Ocean. This is the fruit of years of careful scientific study in the Soviet Arctic.

Tweedledum-Tweedledee

GEORGES BONNET, who enjoys the reputation of being the most venal of all French politicians, has had his Foreign Ministry portfolio lifted by Premier Edouard Daladier and has been rewarded with the post of minister of justice. This is the most delicious of Munich ironies, for M. Bonnet was the center of the notorious affair involving Otto Abetz, the Nazi spy. The spy ring's connections with M. Bonnet were so flagrant that the Daladier gang was almost dumped out of office. Now, as minister of justice, M. Bonnet will have the agreeable task of investigating himself for treason. The new cabinet includes several members of the *Parti Union Republicaine*, French branch of Hitler's National Socialist Party, which includes M. Flandin, so crooked that he cannot be countenanced even in French politics. These are the great "democratic statesmen," who lead the people against fascism.

What Peace Means

THE USSR is now the only major country in Europe which has not instituted war rations or civil restrictions. It is also the only country of the five major powers which has absolutely no censorship on foreign correspondents.

Distant Thunder

AIR MINISTRY and Police headquarters in Berlin have been "mysteriously" bombed. Czech leaders have been rounded up in Praha and taken to Germany. The absolute quiet of Czechoslovakia indicated to the Nazis how

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well disciplined was Czech resistance. These are the only two admitted facts of the underground war in Germany, although many rumors of strikes and anti-war demonstrations have come from Copenhagen and the Netherlands.

Fair Exchange

WE GAVE England Joe Kennedy and they gave us Lord Lothian. Ambassador Kennedy has become the subject of considerable eyebrow lifting among English circles who had heard him state that Roosevelt is under the influence of Jews, and hence should not be considered the true voice of the American people. The U. S. Embassy in London, according to the authoritative London news sheet, the *Week,* has become not only the nominal guardian of English business interests in Germany, but the clearing house for "feelers" between Chamberlain and Hitler in the latest attempts to reconstruct the Cliveden-Whilhelmstrasse war plot against the USSR. Lord Lothian, his majesty's new envoy to Washington, member of the Anglo-German Fellowship, and leading Clivedenite, said in 1935 that "Germany must be given a position appropriate to a nation which would normally be regarded as the most powerful single state in Europe."

American Flux

THE first business week reflecting war influence showed the curve of the New York *Times* index breaking sharply upward, from 94 to 97. The steel industry, crowing its suddenly acquired morality, announced there would be no increase in price for the fall quarter despite rising wages and production costs. What this actually means is that steel ordered under summer prices will be delivered this fall at no extra charge, but steel ordered now for delivery next year will cost the price in effect on the shipping date, which will naturally be higher. What this comes down to is that steel orders take three months to fulfill and that the boys don't have the nerve to jack the price on material ordered three months ago. But orders taken now—we shall see about that in January, say the magnates.

The farmer sees a break for his huge surpluses in livestock and grain, but nothing like the famous $2.20 wheat of the last war. Consumers' food prices took an immediate jump, but the farmer got little of the difference, as usual. Kansas City wheat futures were listed at the end of the second week of war at 82 cents a bushel, which in 1914, the year of the norm, brought $1.16.

It's Happening in Queens

IN 1922, Lord Craigavon's government of Northern Ireland passed the Special Powers Act under the terms of which any citizen is liable to arrest and imprisonment without charge or trial for an indefinite period. Immediately there was mobilized a corps of "specials" or special constables, thugs and provocateurs, whose notorious terrorism is known to every Irish Catholic of the six provinces.

Last week, George U. Harvey, borough president of Queens County in New York City, laid plans for the mobilization of 3,200 honorary deputy sheriffs "to suppress spying, sabotage, and other subversive activities." This was done, since the LaGuardia administration of New York City has started legislation designed to unify the obsolete county sheriff system into one citywide organization.

The lawyer for Sheriff Maurice Fitzgerald of Queens indicates the possible use of such "specials" in his press statement:

> Most people don't realize that under the laws of the state we could knock all of the police out of Queens County if we want to and take over the policing ourselves.

It is later than you think in Queens.

Public-Spirited Publisher

FIRST paragraph of a full-page ad in the New York *Times* for the Philadelphia *Inquirer,* whose publisher, M. L. Annenberg, Republican boss, is under indictment by the Federal Government for income tax frauds:

> If you talk with the head of a big business enterprise, nine times out of ten you will find an idealist. When M. L. Annenberg became publisher of the *Inquirer* in 1936, his determination to make the *Inquirer* one of the greatest newspapers in America meant . . . SUPERLATIVE GREATNESS IN PUBLIC SERVICE.

Better than Bank Night

A LONDON movie theater man has offered a $40,000 reward for Hitler delivered to the boxoffice alive.

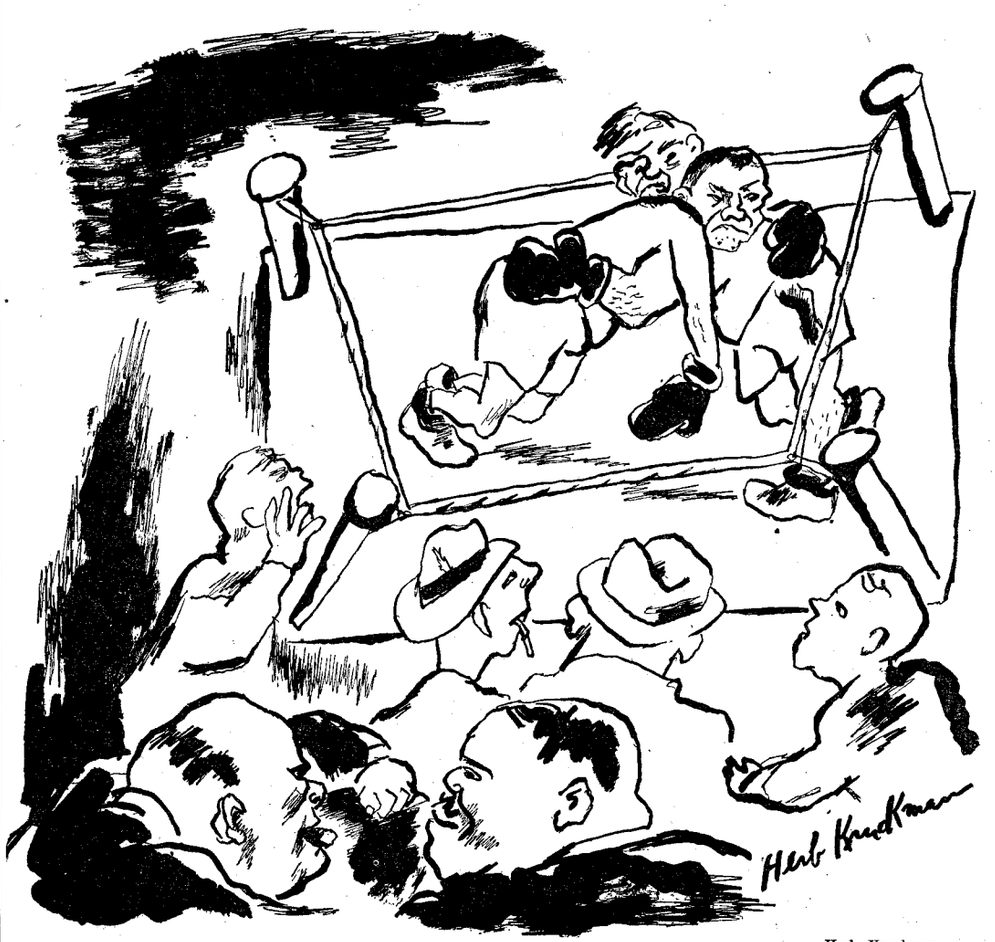
Labor Advances

RIGHT after Ben Stolberg got his handsome *Satevepost* emolument for revealing the pitiful state of the dwindling CIO, an NLRB vote in six Detroit plants of the Briggs Manufacturing Co. gave the CIO 90 percent of the votes.

Yes, Isn't It?

"THEY [British and French officials] have good reason to believe that Adolf Hitler may very well lose in the long run, rather than gain, by the Soviet intervention. When asked last night as to the consequence of the Soviet move, a British government spokesman replied by putting a query in turn.

" 'Isn't it premature,' he asked, 'to assume that this invasion will be all to the advantage of Germany?' "—*London dispatch in New York "Herald Tribune."*



Herb Kruckman

"I hear Ribbentrop is very confused about the pact."

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Readers' Forum

A Liberal on the USSR

To New Masses: Enclosed find remittance for an introductory twelve-week subscription. Up to the present I have, from time to time, bought a copy of New Masses to supplement the news given by the daily press. Events, however, have necessitated this humble contribution on my part. I am not a Communist but I have the honor of being a consistent, true liberal. I have witnessed the amazing spectacle during the last two weeks of the American press' campaign of vilification against the Soviet Union. I presume the publishers of our "respectable" press would have given their soul for such a Roman holiday as they have had since the signing of the Soviet-German pact. The *Nation* and *New Republic,* the hope of the true liberal, have followed suit but I pride myself in not having changed my mind one iota in spite of Ludwig Lore and Philips and the editorials in the New York *Post.* Today, after the Red Army has marched into Poland, my faith in the Soviet Union is unshaken. I might question in my mind such a move on the part of the Russian leaders, but I do not forget the semi-fascist government that Poland has had and I say that a Soviet regime for that unhappy country would be infinitely better than what she has had up to now.

New York J. A. L.

Civil Liberties in Iowa

To New Masses: Yesterday morning, September 13, we received the following telegram from Mrs. Emma Baer, wife of the Sioux City, Iowa, Communist Party section organizer: "State and section organizer in Sioux City jail. Four others also. All literature confiscated. Held on open charges. What can you do to help."

In less than four hours all six were released on $500 bond each.

This morning we received a letter from Carl Martin, one of the six men arrested, which reads in part:

"We held a small private meeting at the Jackson Hotel in Sioux City at which Bob Carson, state secretary of the Communist Party of Iowa, spoke on the international situation. Afterwards, as Ted Baer was entering his car with two friends and carrying a suitcase of literature, all three were arrested and jailed, and the literature was held. At 2:30 next morning Baer's house was raided and all literature, correspondence, and miscellaneous material taken. Bob Carson, Wilbur Howard, and I were arrested and jailed as were the previous three on 'open charges.' Just before you secured our release on $500 bond each, we were charged with 'inciting to hostilities against the government' and 'belonging to an organization advocating overthrow of the government by force and violenc —the same being two sections of the Iowa crim' syndicalism law."

Because other attacks by private agencies have prefaced this attempt to discredit progressive forces in Iowa, it becomes necessary to initiate a statewide and nationwide campaign to expose this plan of reaction, and it is necessary to employ the most able court defense to see that this case results in an acquittal.

The Midwest Regional office of the International Labor Defense at 192 North Clark St., Chicago, is already taking steps to carry forward both the campaign and the defense in Iowa. We need financial assistance. Our legal staff and organizers are waiting for "traveling expenses." We are asking New Masses readers as friends of progress and democracy to help us stop this offensive of reaction and deal an effective counter-blow.

Bob Wirtz,
Acting State Secretary,
Chicago. International Labor Defense.

"The Grapes of Wrath"

To New Masses: Samuel Sillen's article on the suppression and sabotage of circulation of *The Grapes of Wrath* (New Masses, September 12 issue) revealed facts pertaining to public libraries in several sections of the country. Boston belongs in the same category as other cities imposing their own censorship upon the public. My own copy of the book, purchased immediately upon release, has been on my bookshelf about three days only in all the months since. From friends, I receive the information that copies are almost taboo in the public libraries.

Research on the basis of your article and my friends' experience, through various channels and with much circumlocution, revealed the following facts:

The city of Boston has one main library, thirty-one branches. Its total circulation for the year ending Dec. 1, 1938, was 4,383,833. These figures apply to the city proper alone, not to the Metropolitan District as well. Boston is the sixth largest city in the United States, and how many copies does it possess of the current best seller? How many copies of *The Grapes of Wrath* are available to the four million readers dependent upon the public libraries? Six copies are available.

The librarian at the reserve desk insisted that there were additional copies in the branches. Upon persistent questioning she refused, however, to reveal which ones had the copies. She adopted a most pessimistic attitude towards the possibility of my obtaining a copy except after much waiting. There is a long list already of those who want the book, and a still longer list when the branches are considered.

Though I insisted that it might be easier for me to add my name to a branch list, or to get the book from one of the less used branches through some friend, the librarian persisted in demanding that I apply at the main library. When I refused to do so, and demanded the names of the branches which did have their own copies, she referred me to a library official. I did not, however, trouble to continue that part of the investigation, for I felt that the results of an interview with an official would not prove any more satisfactory.

Upon questioning the attendant at the West End branch, I discovered that the situation was even worse than was previously indicated. He confirmed the fact that the Central Library had a total of half a dozen copies, but stated quite emphatically that *none* of the branches had copies of their own.

The West End Branch supplies one of the more densely populated areas, a slum area as well. Multiply by thirty-one its situation with regard to the availability of *The Grapes of Wrath,* and it sounds most unpromising to readers of Boston.

The Central Library, moreover, is in a business rather than a residential area. Its circulation within the immediate district is probably *relatively* less than in the case of branches supplying other areas. In addition, the district is occupied by middle class or wealthy families that constitute circulation for bookstores rather than for public libraries.

One more fact will, I think, complete the picture. The offer of a book as a gift is generally a simple process. But this is no ordinary book. The assistant had to refer the matter to the librarian in charge. The librarian in charge could make no decision in the matter. The book would have to be sent to the Central Library for permission or authorization to place it on the branch shelf. Moreover, as the librarian let slip, it would not necessarily follow that the book would be allotted to any particular branch, but might very well be placed with the others guarded so apprehensively by the main library.

Boston. T. F.

Dr. Younghill Kang

To New Masses: We would like to call to the attention of New Masses readers the position of one of America's prominent authors and scholars, Dr. Younghill Kang. Dr. Kang, a graduate of Harvard University and a member of the League of American Writers ever since it was founded, is at present serving as a professor of English at New York University and as a staff member of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Dr. Kang was formerly a member of the editorial staff of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and was twice given the Guggenheim Foundation Award in creative literature. He is the author of two well known books, *The Grass Roof* and *East Goes West.*

In spite of these obvious accomplishments, which more than go to prove Dr. Kang's creative and cultural abilities as well as to identify him intimately with the American scene, Dr. Kang is not a citizen of the United States and cannot become a citizen under our present naturalization laws because of his race. Dr. Kang was born in Korea and has been a legal resident of the United States for the last eighteen years. His wife and two children are American-born citizens.

The American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born strongly feels that Dr. Kang should be an American citizen. Two bills in his behalf have been introduced in the Seventy-sixth Congress by Rep. Kent E. Keller, of Illinois, and Sen. Matthew M. Neely, of West Virginia. If these bills are passed by Congress, Dr. Younghill Kang can fulfill a lifelong ambition and become an American by citizenship.

We ask that readers of New Masses write to their congressmen urging them to support these bills. We also ask that they send contributions to finance our campaign to help Younghill Kang become an American citizen, to the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, 79 Fifth Ave., New York City.

Herman F. Reissig,
Chairman.

Chicago Workers School

To New Masses: May I call the attention of your readers in Chicago to the opportunities offered by the Workers School of Chicago. For the coming term, which opens on October 9, we are offering a wide series of courses including American History, Political Economy, Fundamentals of Political Education, as well as special courses on trade union questions, Women in the Democratic Front, Literature and Society, questions of international affairs, etc. We invite all New Masses readers in the Chicago area to visit us at 431 South Dearborn St., or to phone and ask for information at Harrison 3226.

Frank Meyer.
Chicago. Director

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Writers and the War

The first of two articles by Samuel Sillen on the role of writers in the struggle for democracy and a genuine peace.

CAUTION must be exercised in drawing parallels between the present war and the war of 1914-18. The temptation to find a mechanical point-by-point correspondence between the two world conflicts must be resisted. For events do not move in a circle. History cannot produce identical twins twenty-five years removed.

The world picture is more complex today than it was in 1914. The peace which was imposed by the victorious imperialist bloc at Versailles created more problems than it solved. It redivided the world, but it did not make the world safe for either democracy or peace. A revived and more aggressive German imperialism is engaged in another war within a generation after it was purportedly crushed. Marching under swastikas and led by Hitler, it menaces mankind. Its power has been built with the aid of its major First World War foe—British imperialism. Britain and France are at war with a rival German imperialism, as in 1914; but with this difference: that the rival has in advance been showered with the military and economic riches of Austria and Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Nor was this gift an expression of the British sporting spirit. The gift was in reality a bribe. And the nature of this bribe introduces a second new factor in the world situation—the Soviet Union. The bloodless victories which British imperialism handed to German imperialism in the Second Imperialist War were an inducement to deflect the war drive to the socialist state which had emerged from the October Revolution. But the fascist warmakers, as it turned out, manifested an ungentlemanly lack of gratitude toward the British warmakers. They swallowed the gifts —unfortunately, they did not choke on them —and they turned against the givers. And the Soviet Union, which had relied not on territorial donations but on its own strength, refused to commit suicide to serve imperialist convenience. Twenty years earlier, when it was fighting for life, the Soviet Union had been used as a gift box from which British charity had plucked Russian lands and populations. In 1939 it refused to be an offering.

In these two respects, then, we have a different world picture from that of 1914. On one-sixth of the earth socialism is victorious and strong. In western Europe the rival Anglo-French and German imperialisms, having apparently concluded their miserable honeymoon, are engaged in a war whose character is influenced by a history of collaborative aggressions. Plan A—via Munich toward the Soviet Union—has failed; Plan B—more closely resembling the old fashioned imperialist war—is on the agenda; Plan C—a truly anti-fascist, anti-imperialist war—is a necessary third alternative which the peoples of the world have it in their power to command.

While we must avoid mechanical parallels, while the present war and the last war cannot be described as identical twins, they can certainly be described at this stage as brothers under the skin. For the present stage is Plan B. A ruthless, aggressive fascist imperialism is at war with a rival imperialism which has neither the desire nor the capacity to fight for a just and democratic peace—which means an anti-fascist, anti-imperialist peace. The issue was placed squarely by Theodore Draper in his cable from London in NEW MASSES two weeks ago:

> It is for the French and British people to decide. It cannot be said that the decision has yet been made, although the very dynamics of war may hasten matters. *It is one thing to fight Hitler's system, another to preserve Chamberlain's. Those who seek to do the latter will never succeed at the former.*

The position of American writers toward world events has in the past few years taken definite shape. The great majority of American writers have declared their desire for peace. Because they desired peace, American writers opposed the war policy of Munich; Chamberlain and Daladier supported that policy. Because they desired peace, American writers opposed non-intervention, the betrayal of Spain; the British and French governments dictated non-intervention. American writers sought the establishment of a peace front, of sanctions in Ethiopia, of assistance to China; so did the peoples of America, Britain, and France. But each of these peace measures, fully supported by the Soviet Union, was killed by the reactionaries in America, Britain, and France.

In short, American writers, concerned as

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they have been with the preservation of peace and culture against the menace of war and fascist barbarism, have pursued a policy of fighting against Hitler. And in pursuing this policy, they discovered at each stage that the fight against Hitlerism had to go hand in hand with the fight against Chamberlainism.

Now that there is war between Germany and Britain, we shall commit the blindest folly if we forget for one moment that: *"It is one thing to fight Hitler's system, another to preserve Chamberlain's. Those who seek to do the latter will never succeed at the former."* For Plan B, the present Chamberlain plan, is as plainly imperialist in character as Plan A, Chamberlain's plan at Munich. Indeed, it is not decisively ruled out, even now, that there will be a shuttling between the two policies. And a war of this character will not be a war against fascism, the abomination of all civilized men, but a war differing in no essential respects from the war of 1914-18 which American writers today realize was neither democratic nor just, both in its wartime character and in its eventual outcome.

An effort will be made to stampede writers into support of imperialism in this war as there was in the last. We do not want to support the same *kind* of war. Our feeling against fascism is strong, and for the best of all possible reasons, knowing fascism as we do. We want to help the fight against fascism. An imperialist war in 1939 will no more restore democracy than an imperialist war in 1914. We truly fight fascism only when we lend our support to the forces which seek to make this an anti-fascist, anti-imperialist war; we do not fight fascism when we lend our support uncritically to the forces which betrayed us in Spain and Czechoslovakia.

In his essay on "The War and the Intellectuals," written in June 1917, Randolph Bourne pointed out the folly of those writers who were deluding themselves that they were fighting "a war free from any taint of self-seeking, a war that will secure the triumph of democracy and internationalize the world!" We have had our bitter lesson. We do not wish to be swept again into the emotional currents of government-controlled propaganda, nor are we eager to be described as "more loyalist than the king, more British than Australia." We are critical of the British and French governments because we fully support the interests of the British and French peoples; just as we despise German fascism because we sympathize with the German people. And, faithful to our ideals, we shall realistically appraise the methods which will achieve our goal.

In another essay on the war, Bourne asked a question which is even more pertinent today than it was in 1917: "Which do our rulers really fear more, the menace of imperial Germany, or the liberating influence of a socialist Russia?" This we must ask of ourselves morning, noon, and night. For the imperialists' hatred of the Soviet Union, which has never slackened since the people took power in 1917, has reached a new and ominous intensity in this war. The imperialist powers froth at the mouth because the land of socialism is at peace. Having unequivocally turned down repeated efforts at a peace bloc, they hysterically condemn the Soviet Union for "deserting" the peace bloc. Having laid plans for a war between Germany and the USSR and Japan, they wax indignant because the Soviets take steps to prevent such a war. Having abandoned the Polish people to the terrors of fascist invasion and internal chaos, they are morally outraged by the Soviet Union's protection of the population against these terrors—a population, be it remembered, which the Allied powers had forcibly wrenched from Russia. And in the various countries of the world, they unleash a torrent of invective against, and call for the undemocratic repression of, all those who insist on pointing out the obvious truth. They are thus seeking to destroy the second factor—the only genuine peace factor—that emerged from the First World War.

In this period of crisis, American writers have a profound obligation to discover and to tell the truth. We are against fascism; we must search beneath the phrases of the Chamberlains to learn what their intent actually is. We are for peace; we must not allow America to become involved in war. We are for democracy; we must resist all efforts in this country to suppress those who refuse to be stampeded by war-office propaganda against the Soviet Union. Writers will be put to the test in times like these. We enlist with the enemies of peace and democracy when we shirk our responsibility to keep our eyes on reality and to proclaim the truth.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Elliot Paul's Mystery

THE MYSTERIOUS MICKEY FINN, *by Elliot Paul. Modern Age. 50 cents.*

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JAMES DUGAN.

Overthrow of Czardcm

THE FALL OF THE RUSSIAN MONARCHY: A STUDY OF THE EVIDENCE, *by Bernard Pares. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. $5.*

AS THE title indicates, this is a factual study of the events which contributed to the collapse of czardom. Professor Pares views history from the recorded facts in his careful presentation of the political, military, economic, and personal factors of pre-revolutionary Russia. He traces the cancerous decay of the autocracy, evaluating the general and the personal elements which accelerated the course of events. However, he places somewhat too much emphasis on the influence of highly placed individuals and personal decisions and does not give statistical or scientifically exact reports of social and economic conditions which underlay czardom's fall. Professor Pares, who was on the scene during the years from 1904 to 1919, believes that the Revolution accomplished a colossal and desirable change. His narrative of the Revolution, however, is less detailed than the preceding chapters and is recorded not from the archives of the Soviets but from works of Kerensky, Buchanan, and Milyukov, with the result that it has the flavor of Menshevism, although it is not anti-Bolshevik in content.

L. L.

Cashing in on the Bard

THIS SHAKESPEARE INDUSTRY, *by Ivor Brown and George Fearon. Harper & Bros. $2.75.*

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J. D.

Book Notes

THREE new volumes in the American Guide Series have been issued by Viking Press: Montana, Nebraska, and Minnesota ($2.50 each). As the various state guides pile up, one realizes what a tremendous contribution the Federal Writers Project has made to American life. Expertly edited and illustrated, these new volumes will be useful to all readers, from archeologists to trailer-gypsies. . . . Clifford Odets is a news headliner these days: his *Golden Boy* is produced by Columbia; Grover Whalen announces a *Golden Boy* day at the New York World's Fair; and now Random House issues two separate editions of his collected plays. The $2.50 edition, like the 95 cents Modern Library edition, includes prefaces by Odets and Harold Clurman as well as *Waiting for Lefty, Till the Day I Die, Awake and Sing, Paradise Lost, Golden Boy,* and *Rocket to the Moon.* . . . The new Modern Library editions, as we pointed out once before, are appearing in a new binding. After selling over fourteen million books in twenty years, Modern Library's Bennett Cerf sends a letter commenting on the various covers that have been tried: Originally the books were bound "in imitation leather that looked well before the books were used but that did not wear too well and had the additional fault of becoming reasonably offensive to the olfactory apparatus when the castor oil, used in the manufacture of the cloth, inevitably turned rancid after exposure to the sun. In 1926 this binding was dropped and replaced by a semi-flexible balloon cloth." The new format is superior to both. All of which renews our hope for progress in book publishing. Our slogan: give the reader a break and watch publisher's intake and author's royalties go up.

Aaron Elkind

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Baseball: The Nearly National Game

Hugh Bradley, noted sports writer, tells the inside story of how Negroes are barred from organized baseball. The fight for Negro talent.

IN THIS year there has been celebrated the centennial of the sport long known as "America's National Game." The festival, of course, has occasioned much gladsome activity of typewriter and tongue. With characteristic keenness of observation and meticulousness of detail the New York *Herald Tribune* has reported on the many hundreds of our greatest industrial concerns which so gallantly maintain their own inter-plant leagues. The more articulate clubowners have proudly recited figures to prove that this year's total of cash customers will top the 1938 record of sixty million. Countless other fulsome tributes have been variously uttered to attest the widespread popularity and essential democracy of the sport.

In spite of this wholesale laying on of words, though, one fact remains to plague fans and the more honorable of those who achieve their livelihoods from baseball. It is the fact that America's National Game is the victim of an unwritten Jim Crow law as fantastic and as inexorable as any ever set in statute book by hillbilly legislature.

By the workings of this unwritten law no Negro is permitted to participate as a player in organized baseball. Since organized baseball is the combination of big and little lily-white leagues throughout the country he thus is deprived of an opportunity to earn such fame and fortune in America's National Game as his talents might otherwise warrant.

There we have a situation that would be filled with high tones of irony and even comedy were it not that current injustices and tragic possibilities outweigh such considerations. In proof let us examine quickly some of the background of this game heralded in the press as a typical and worthy product of these United States.

According to its official historians, baseball first was played in Cooperstown, N. Y., in 1839. This was at a period when the crusade to destroy the abomination of chattel slavery was gathering its real momentum. Cooperstown even then was supporting the cause with men and money so ardently that there was little time for noting this new game, which presently was to grow into a multi-million-dollar trust discriminating against a full 10 percent of the nation's population.

The inventor of the game, say official historians, was Abner Doubleday. This was the same Abner Doubleday who, as a captain of artillery, sighted the first gun fired for the Union at Fort Sumter. He also was the same Abner Doubleday who, as a major general, was in command of the Union Army at the close of the first day's fighting at Gettysburg.

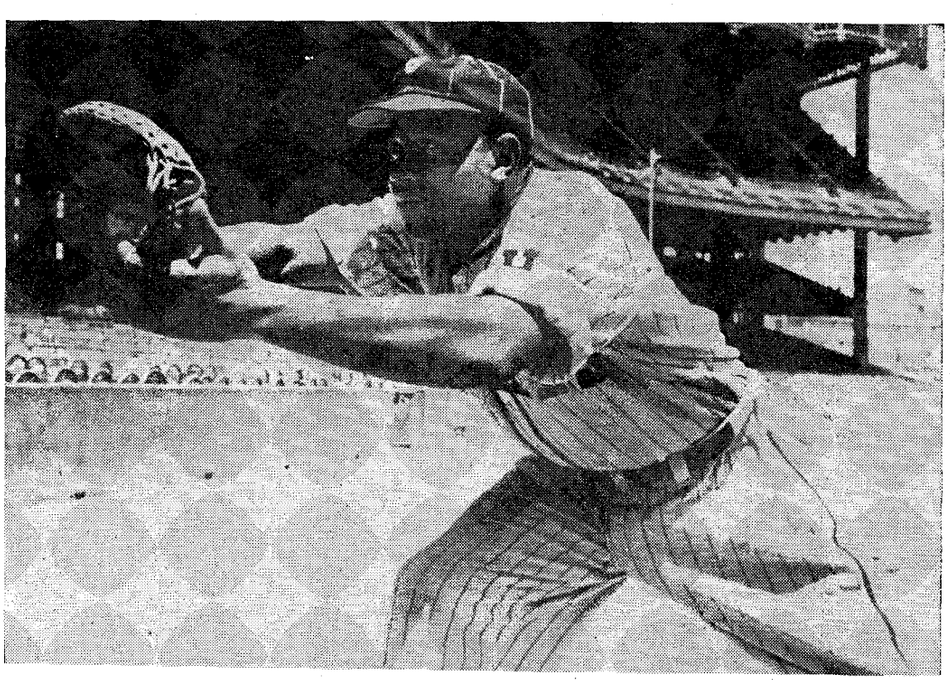
Even now the connection of baseball with events which took place some seventy-five years ago is well defined. The $50,000 a year high commissioner of organized baseball is Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis who was installed in 1920. The judge was named in honor of a Civil War battlefield on which his father was wounded while striving to show the South the error of its ways. His office is a showroom for Lincoln memorabilia.

Judge Landis long since has become an old man striving painfully to hold on to a cushy job in which he has outlived his usefulness to his bosses. Even as late as ten years ago, though, he might have exercised his well-nigh absolute power to ensure the Negro a fair break in organized baseball. That he did not choose to do so seems to point another of those paradoxes which might be amusing were it not for the lessons thinking men have lately come to learn.

As a columnist and department head for a New York newspaper I had considerable experience with such paradoxes. The baseball man who protested to me most bitterly against the admission of Negroes to organized baseball is a second generation Irish Catholic. He is a man of mediocre ability who, through sheer good fortune, has become one of baseball's highest salaried executives. He was born in the North and is located in a city with a vast Negro population.

The loudest mass squawk in one room was emitted in the office of the Twentieth Century Sports Club. I had suggested that there were at least twenty Negroes who, if given a chance, must necessarily improve such weak-sister clubs as the St. Louis Browns or the Phillies and that one pitcher such as Satchel Paige might easily boost Brooklyn's Dodgers into the first division. In the midst of the efforts to shout down such heretic sentiments no one seemed to note that the Twentieth Century Sports Club could not have prospered, or even have existed, save for the heavyweight champion Joe Louis. Later, though, one of the famous newspapermen partners in the concern did have the grace to admit that his opposition to Negroes in baseball was based upon a personal interest in keeping the Harlem trade mainly concerned with prizefighting.

Similarly it was Mr. J. David Stern, a professed liberal publisher and another collector of Lincolniana, who provided further enlightenment as to how Jim Crowism can continue to exercise its malignant influence in organized baseball. The managing editor had run to cry on papa's shoulder because within a few days I had written a column, wangled an editorial, and arranged a picture layout all dealing with organized baseball's color-consciousness. "What are you trying to do?" said Mr. Stern. "Ruin me? Of course it looks good to run something like that now and then but you've got to have some sense about it. There's no use in getting nice people sore, and



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besides, don't you know that kind of circulation's not worth a damn to advertisers?"

Such examples of stupidity and greed are here set down so that they may provide some basis for planning the fight to obtain equal rights in organized baseball. Along with a so-called tradition they are right now the main things to be combated. This "tradition," incidentally, should be given more than casual attention. Apart from the chauvinists and those few others who think with their hips, most professional ballplayers find it difficult to explain why Negroes are barred. When cornered in calm, friendly discussion they most often seek escape in the "well, anyhow it's tradition" stock answer.

Actually an early scarcity of capable Negro ballplayers is the main reason for what is called tradition. The first professional team was the Cincinnati Red Stockings who began to play for pay in 1869, winning seventy-eight games and tieing one before finally being defeated. Baseball, as a widespread money-making, organized business, began then and achieved some measure of permanence when the National League was formed in 1876.

Such dates are given to indicate that, at the time, the Negro was more concerned with making a living under changed conditions than he was in the mere playing of games. For much the same reason he was unable to develop his talents as a player during the next forty years. Then, with somewhat improved economic conditions and with increased playground facilities, he began to make progress. Since the last World War, and more particularly during the past ten years, his athletic advance has been more rapid than that of any other group. This latter fact makes it apparent that he must soon attain proper status in organized baseball. Individuals, no matter how brilliant, often are discriminated against. Enlightened self-interest must prevent the club-owners from long maintaining this discrimination against an increasing group of talented players.

In 1938 paid admissions to the two major leagues totalled $10,267,891. Such pretty income indicates that there is no squeamishness as to whose money is taken in at the gate. By the same token, if some such highly touted showman and innovator as Larry MacPhail of Brooklyn would defy bigotry and hire several Negro players it is unlikely that there would be any considerable furor among either club-owners or players.

For the most part there is no long-continued community among players. They are traded or sold from team to team as need arises. They come from all regions and walks of life. True, there have been teams infused with Ku Klux Klan venom. Mainly, though, baseball players are human beings possessed of the same frailties and virtues as other people.

Probably the first Negro to become a member of a major league club, or indeed of any club in organized baseball, will have to undergo a period of hazing. He may have to duck a few balls tossed at his head or to step warily lest he be scarred by spikes. During my own time I have seen three new groups become factors in baseball—college men, Italians, and Jews. Each of them has undergone such similar treatment and then been accepted. Since as yet there is no really strong Nazi-fascist element among baseball players there is no reason to suspect that the Negro's probationary period would be any worse than that of the others. Naturally the incompetents, seeing their own security threatened by the rise of a new group of competents, might oppose him. By this time, though, he should be used to such opposition and know how to handle it.

There you have the facts as they appear to a sports writer of seventeen years' experience who has discussed the subject with all manner of baseball people. Lack of a properly implemented drive seems to me the real reason why the unwritten Jim Crow law continues in force. It is too easy to avoid the issue by calling names or by smothering it with the "Yes, but nice people won't like it" gaggeroo.

I suggest that those interested in fair play and the elimination of noxious bans make some more diligent effort to obtain proper aid from the metropolitan daily press. Right now such papers as do touch the subject give it only a lick and a promise. That is not enough. Let such professed guardians of the public interest as the New York *Times* or the *World-Telegram* tackle the unwritten law vigorously and frequently. Baseball's overlords are notoriously sensitive to prods from such pious precincts. Undoubtedly concrete results would quickly be forthcoming. Besides, it would do no harm to the immortal souls of those editors who still seek to stultify readers with sophistries anent sportsmanship when twelve million Americans continue barred from "America's National Game."

HUGH BRADLEY.

The Boy Grew Older

The second picture of the Gorky trilogy, "On His Own."

THE screen's finest biographical study is undoubtedly the life of Maxim Gorky from Lenfilm studios. The second part, *On His Own,* has newly opened at the Cameo (N. Y.). It gives us the penniless lad knocking about in ancient Russia after the collapse of the Kashirin household told in *The Childhood of Maxim Gorky*. He is hired as a slop boy in a bourgeois family for six rubles a year, but his only pay comes in slaps and kicks. Young Alyosha, who has learned to read from his grandfather, is hungry for books. An educated woman next door lends him Dumas' *Queen Margot* and *The Works of Pushkin,* which the boy secretly reads at night by reflecting the light of the moon with a cooking pot. Try as the brutish family would to destroy his growing mind and heart, they could not. But the boy finally has to leave.

He becomes a scullery boy on a Volga steamer, befriended by a huge, grossly formed cook with a bulbous nose and a fierce, vault

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ing mustache. The cook is another great soul imprisoned in miserable Russia and he blubbers and cries at the sad story of Taras Bulba when young Alyosha reads aloud to him. Towed behind their boat, like an evil conscience, is a convict barge with the fettered men eternally peering through the bars at them as the boat slowly ploughs the great river. In the haunting moonlight the guards walk back and forth on top of the barge; the boy and the cook sit watching on the stern, dreaming of something to come, something coming as slowly and painfully to Holy Russia as a steamer creeping up the Volga with a prison dragging behind.

The boy is framed by a sniveling waiter and is thrown off the boat. He finds a job grinding colors in an ikon shop, an establishment full of slavery and piety, with rows of aging artists turning out effigies of the saints. The eyes of these old men light up when they see the spirited boy rebelling against the proprietor, finally beating the boss up when he is asked to spy on the others.

Out of a job again he goes back to wise grandmother Ivanovna and his crazy grandfather Kashirin, who prays so frequently that grandmother allows God must be tired of his whining. The old people are starving gently. After a short visit the boy sets off again on the Volga.

CONTENT DETERMINES FORM

As a motion picture the Gorky studies have a pronounced literary form, broken with chapter headings and quotations, quite unlike the accustomed movie style. Mark Donskoy, the able director, has used Gorky's biographical form up to the hilt. With lesser material such a treatment might become mere illustration, but here it is superbly right. That is because the spirit of Gorky, his characterizations and physical descriptions are stunningly reborn with the camera. Not enough can be said for the settings of the two pictures: the dirty, unkempt slums of czarist Russia, the brooding banks of the Volga, interiors of the gloomy bourgeois houses, or the hovels of the ragged people. The director has used a bare minimum of sets and false skies; instead the actual sun on actual streets and flies crawling over the actors.

The cast of the first picture is intact, with the Moscow schoolboy, Alyosha Lyarsky, now dignified with the given name, Alexei, in keeping with his gangling progress, contributing his superb portrayal of the boy. V. Massalitinova, the redoubtable character actress, appears briefly as the grandmother, and M. Troyanovsky continues his rich characterization of the unhinged grandfather. Among the superb bit roles, A. Timontayev has that of the cook, Smuri.

The story comes from *My Childhood* and some semi-biographical fragments in Gorky's short stories. The next picture will show us Gorky as a young man, as he is portrayed in *My University Days. On His Own* is a picture not to be missed.

JAMES DUGAN.

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